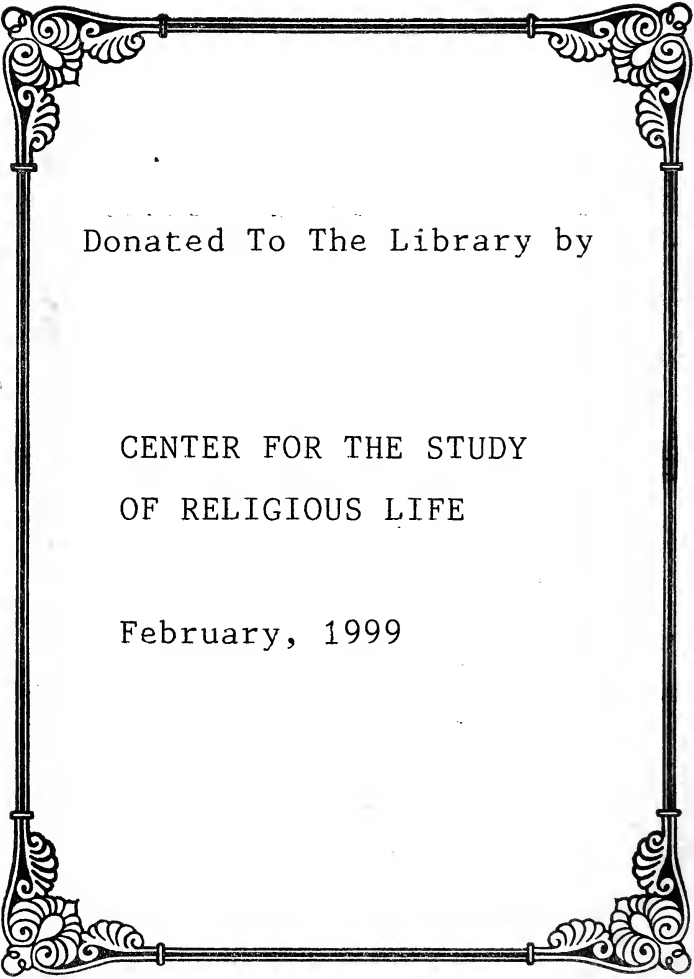


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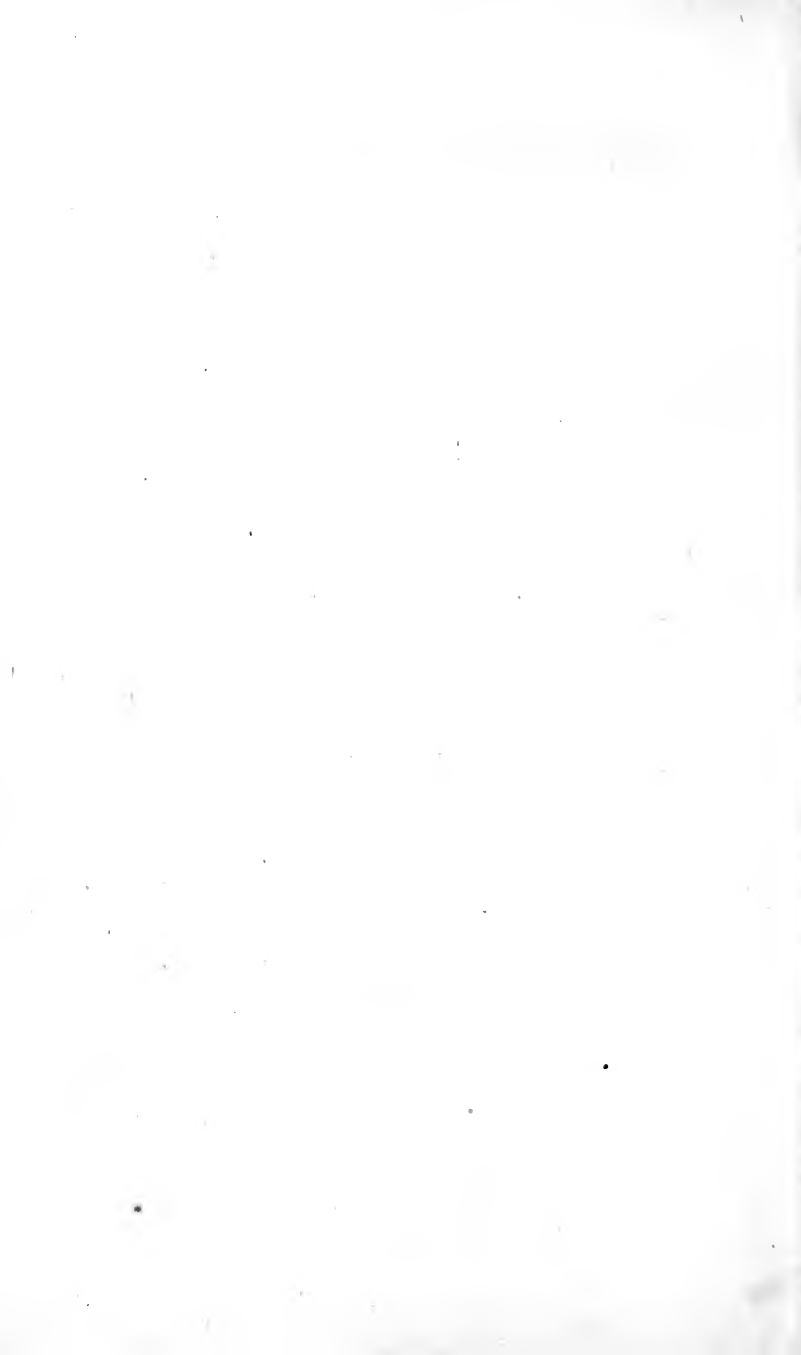
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CONSTITUTIONS AND RULES

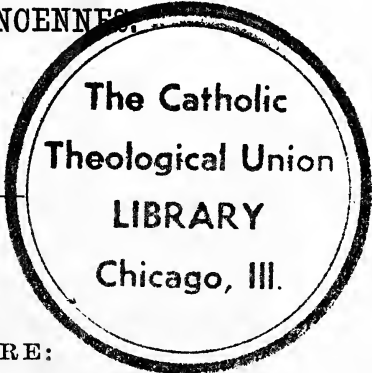
OF THE

SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE

OF

ST. MARY'S OF THE WOODS,

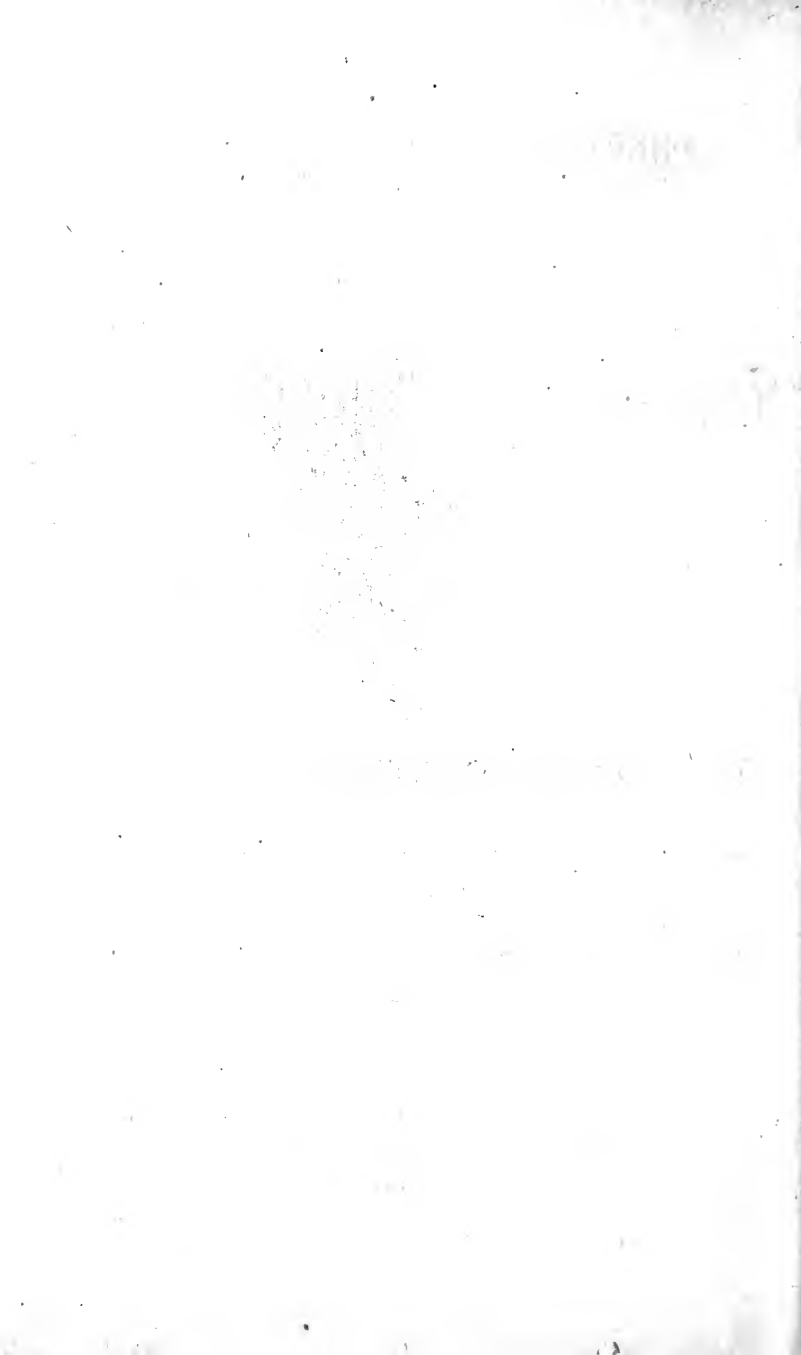
DIOCESE OF VINCENNES.



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1872.



Having examined this revised
edition of the Constitutions and
Rules of the Sisters of Providence,
We do hereby approve the same
and order them to be strictly
observed.

Vincennes Dec. 20th 1871.

+ Maurice J. P. P. P.
Bishop of Vincennes

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ERRATA.



Chap. 20th, Art. 205, for two and a half, read $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches; for three, read $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches; for four, read $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Art. 206, for seven, read $7\frac{7}{8}$ inches, for eight lines, read $\frac{5}{8}$ of an inch.

The former are the French measure, the latter the corresponding English measure.



EVIDENCES.

Community founded by M. Jacques François Dujarié at Ruillé-sur-Loire, Diocese of Le Mans, France, 1806.

The community approved by a royal ordinance (in France), Nov. 19th, 1826.

Constitutions formally approved by Mgr. Jean Baptist Bouvier, Bishop of Mans, 1835.

Right Rev. Celestin de la Hailandière, Bishop of Vincennes, invites the Sisters of Providence to his Diocese, 1840.

1st Pontifical Decree. Approbation of the Work by His Holiness, Gregory Sixteenth, September 30th, 1843.

Right Rev. Celestin de la Hailandière, Bishop of Vincennes, approves the Constitutions, 1846.

Community incorporated by an Act of the Legislature of the State of Indiana, January 14th, 1846.

Right Rev. John Bazin, Bishop of Vincennes, successor of Bishop Celestin de la Hailandière, examined the Constitutions and approved them, 1847.

Right Rev. Maurice de St. Palais, Bishop of Vincennes, successor to Bishop Bazin, fully approves the Rules, September 18th, 1869.

NOTICE UPON THE ORIGIN OF THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE.

*Established at Ruillé-sur-Loir, Department of
Sarthe, in the Diocese of Le Mans.*

Monsieur Jacques François Dujarié, Curate of this Parish in 1802, occupied himself at first in repairing the evils of the Revolution, by adorning his church, which had been devastated, and by instructing his parishioners and edifying them in every manner; inflamed with zeal for the house of God and for the salvation of souls, he neglected nothing for the sanctification of those who were confided to him.

He saw, with sorrow, that a part of his people, being very far from the borough, had not the opportunity of having their children instructed, and that the poor, in their infirmities, were without the most necessary assistance.

In 1806, he had a house built on a piece of waste ground at the farthest extremity of his parish, and placed in it a pious lady to whom he gave the charge of instructing the children and visiting the

sick of that quarter. Several other pious ladies, animated by faith and moved by this devotedness, wished to associate themselves to this good work.

Monsieur Dujarié conceived the idea of confiding some of those ladies to Madame de la Girouardière, foundress of the House of the Incurables at Beaugé, in the Diocese of Angers, in order that she might form them to the religious life, and teach them to bleed the sick. Mme. de la Girouardière willingly undertook this charge, and seven of these pious ladies made, under her care, a novitiate sufficiently long to assure her of their dispositions; they then received the religious habit and returned to the little establishment at Ruillé to attend the school and visit the sick according to the end of their vocation.

Several Curates, especially of the Diocese of Blois, asked of Monsieur Dujarié, Curate of Ruillé, some of these ladies to form schools in their parishes.

For the first few years but few subjects presented themselves, and it was not until 1820 that this little Association took the form of a Congregation, and elected a Superior General, in the person of Madame du Roscoeit, one of the associates, and a lady of great merit, who, seconding wonderfully the zeal of Monsieur Dujarié, gave a great start to the rising society, and caused it to make rapid progress.

The house in which the Sisters continued to dwell, in a true desert, became too small, and was very badly located for a congregation of females on account of its isolated position and too great distance from the church and from all the assistance of which such an association stood in need.

To remedy this, Monsieur Dujarié purchased a piece of ground in the borough of Ruillé, and, with the aid of several charitable persons, and by consecrating all his patrimony to the same purpose, he built there a beautiful house in 1821, to which he conducted his Sisters in 1822.

The Congregation was approved by Royal Ordinance the 19th of November, 1826. Since this epoch it has continued to increase, and in 1834 it numbered already two hundred and five professed Sisters, spread in fifty-eight establishments, in different dioceses.

APPROBATION DE MGR. L'ÉVÊQUE DU MANS.

Jean Baptiste Bouvier, par la miséricorde divine et la grace du saint-siège, Évêque du Mans.

Voulant former et réunir en un corps religieux nos chères filles en J. C. les Sœurs de Charité, dites de la Providence, établie à Ruillé-sur-Loir, dans notre Diocèse, les aider et les encourager dans le

pieux dessein qu'elles ont de travailler à leur propre sanctification et à l'édification du prochain, et désirant d'ailleurs leur donner un haut témoignage du vif intérêt que nous leur portons, avons nous-même dressé et rédigé pour elles les présentes Constitutions et Règles.

En conséquence, nous ordonnons par ces présentes Lettres que les dites Constitutions et Règles soient fidèlement observées par toutes nos chères filles les Sœurs de Charité de la Congregation de Ruillé-sur-Loir, que les Supérieures générales et locales les exécutent et les fassent exécuter par toutes les Sœurs qui leur sont soumises, et qu'il n'y soit fait aucun changement ou modification quelconque, si ce n'est de notre consentement exprès, ou de celui de nos légitimes successeurs.

Donné au Mans, dans notre Palais épiscopal, sous notre seing, le sceau de nos armes et le contre-seing du Secrétaire de notre Évêché, le 8 septembre, 1835, jour de la Nativité de la très Saint Vierge.

{ L. S. }

✠ J. B. ÉV. DU MANS,

Par Monseigneur :

. LOTTIN,

Chan., Secrétaire de l'Évêché.

THE SAME IN ENGLISH.

*Jean Baptiste Bouvier, by the Divine mercy, and
the favor of the Holy See, Bishop of Le Mans.*

Wishing to form and to reunite in one religious body our dear daughters in Jesus Christ, the Sisters of Charity, called of Providence, established at Ruillé-sur-Loire, in our Diocese, to aid and encourage them in their pious design of working for their own sanctification and for the edification of their neighbor; and desiring, besides, to give them a high testimony of the lively interest we take in them, we have ourselves drawn up and committed to writing for them the present Constitutions and Rules.

In consequence, we ordain by these present Letters that the said Constitutions and Rules be faithfully observed by all our dear daughters, the Sisters of Charity of the Congregation of Ruillé-sur-Loire, that the Superiors, General and Local, execute them, and cause them to be executed by all the Sisters who are subject to them, and that no change or modification whatever be made therein, without our express consent, or that of our legitimate successors.

Given at Le Mans, in our Episcopal Palace, under our signature, the seal of our arms, and the counter-signature of the Secretary of our Bishopric, the 8th of September, 1835, feast of the Nativity of the Most Holy Virgin.

{ L. S. }

✠ J. B. ÉV. DU MANS,

Par Monseigneur :

LOTTIN,

Chan. Secrétaire de l'Évêché.

PONTIFICAL APPROBATION OF THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE.

I. PONTIFICAL DECREE.

Approbation of the Work.

§ I.—PETITION OF THE BISHOP OF LE MANS.

Beatissime Pater :

Existit in Diœcesi Cenomanensi, pro erudiendis, informandisque junioribus puellis, fovendisque pauperibus infirmis, sub nomine *Sororum Charitatis Ruillensis* (de Ruillé-sur-Loir), devota Congregatio Virginum, in seculo, absque claustro, degentium, quæ quidem, ab Episcopo Cenomanensi approbata, magis ac magis excrevit. Nunc enim exis-

tunt his centum octoginta quatuor Sorores, præter Novitias ac Postulantes. Domus particulares sunt numero sexaginta sex, per duodecim Diœceses sparsæ, et abundantes sanctificationis fructus ubique producunt.

Ut autem tantæ virtutes ac merita novis incitamenti obfirmentur, hæ Virgines, quæ a me fuerunt Constitutionibus et Regulis donatæ, ardentè exoptant, atque suppliciter efflagitant, ut Sanctæ Sedes Apostolica ipsarum Congregationem adprobare, suæque auctoritate obfirmare dignetur. Earumdem supplicationi, quam ad *Beatitudinem Vestram*, una cum præsentibus Litteris, transmittō, libentissime subscribo, atque peroptatum effectum a *Beatitudine Vestra* suppliciter expostulo. Constitutiones ac Regulas, pro dicta Congregatione a me adprobatas, hic etiam subjungo, ut *Sanctitas Vestra* plenam totius rei habere possit notitiam.

Dignetur *Sanctitas Vestra* me semper habere ut suum devotissimum, ac obsequentissimum filium.

Cenomani, diē 15 Octobris, 1841.

✠ J. B.

Episcopus Cenomanensis.

THE SAME IN ENGLISH.

Most Holy Father :

There exists in the Diocese of Le Mans, under the name of Sisters of Charity of Ruillé-sur-Loire, a pious congregation of uncloistered Virgins, devoted to the instruction of young girls, and the care of the sick poor. This Congregation, which, with the approbation of the Bishop of Le Mans, has not ceased to extend itself more and more, counts at present two hundred and eighty-four Sisters, besides the Novices and Postulants; and its particular establishments, numbering sixty-six, are spread in twelve Dioceses, producing everywhere abundant fruit for the sanctification of souls.

In order that so much virtue and merit may be fortified by new encouragements, these same Virgins, to whom I have given Constitutions and Rules, desire ardently, and ask with instance, that the Holy Apostolic See will deign to approve their Institute and to confirm it by its authority. I subscribe very willingly to their petition, which I transmit to you with these present letters, myself supplicating your Holiness to vouchsafe to be favorable to it.

I send also a copy of the Constitutions and Rules which I have approved for this Congregation, in order that your Holiness may have a full knowledge of this whole affair.

Deign, your Holiness, to consider me as your very devoted and submissive son.

J. B.,

Bishop of Mans.

Le Mans, Oct. 15, 1841.

§ II.—DECREE OF THE SACRED CONGREGATION OF BISHOPS AND REGULARS.

Sanctissimus Dominus Noster Gregorius PP. XVI, audito voto EE. et RR. Patrum S. R. E. Cardinalium Sacræ Congregationis Episcoporum et Regularium, in Audientia habita ab infrascripto D. Secretario ejusdem Sacræ Congregationis, die 11 Augusti 1843, præfatum Institutum summopere laudandum esse edixit, prout præsentis Decreti tenore laudat, atque commendat. Approbationem vero Constitutionum ad aliud tempus differri jussit.

Datum, Romæ, ex Sacra Congregatione Episcoporum et Regularium, die 30 Septembris 1843.

C. CARDINAL PATRITIUS.

FABIUS, *Archiepiscopus Tarensis, Secret.*

(*Loco sigilli.*)

THE SAME IN ENGLISH.

Our Very Holy Father, Pope Gregory XVI, after having heard the wish of their Eminences, the Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, has deigned, in the audience that he granted to the Secretary of the same Sacred Congregation, the 11th of August 1843, to declare that the said Society merited to be praised, as in effect he praises and commends it by virtue of this present Decree. As to the approbation of the Constitutions, he has ordered to defer it to another time.

Given at Rome at the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, the 30th of September, 1843.

C. CARDINAL PATRIZI,*

[L. S.] FABIVS, *Archbishop of Tarse, Secretary.*

II. PONTIFICAL DECREE.

Spiritual Favors and Indulgences Granted to the Sisters of Providence of the Diocese of Vincennes, Indiana.

§ I.—PETITION OF THE BISHOP OF VINCENNES.

Beatissime Pater :

Ego, infrascriptus habeo in mea diocesi centum et octoginta Sorores Congregationis Religiosæ quæ Providentiæ nuncupatur, quæque apud Le Mans in

*Constantin Patrizi, Vicar of His Holiness, and Prefect of several Sacred Congregations.

Gallia primum erecta fuit. Piarum autem harum mulierum institutum in eo consistit, ut præter vota simplicia quæ emittant sub directione Episcopo in puellis educandis aliisque pietatis ac religionis operibus vitam insumant. Experientia autem testatur, eas magno fidelium ac Religionis bono hactenus laborasse. Atque ut de meis tantum loquar, jure affirmare possum, eas per triginta annos ex quo in meam diocesim advenerunt, non solum primitivam suæ Congregationis regulam accurate servasse, sed et maximo mihi auxilio fuisse in religione ac pietate promovenda, et summam ædificationem tam fidelibus quam A catholicis præbuisse.

Itaque humillime rogo ut prædictis Sororibus meæ Diocesis ex Apostolica concessione frui liceat omnibus favoribus indulgentiis, ceterisque privilegiis spiritualibus, quæ Congregationi apud Le Mans existenti per Sedem Apostolicam hactenus concessa fuerunt.

MAURITIUS DE ST. PALAIS,
Episcopus Vincennopolitanus.

THE SAME IN ENGLISH.

Holy Father :

I, the undersigned, have in my Diocese one hundred and eighty Sisters belonging to the religious Institute of the name of Providence, which was

originally established at Le Mans, in France. These pious women are under simple vows; their object is to instruct young girls, and perform other pious and charitable works, under the direction of the Bishops.

Experience proves that, thus far, they have labored successfully for the good of the faithful and of religion.

To speak only of my own experience, I can justly affirm that, during the thirty years they have been in my Diocese, they have not only strictly observed the primitive rule of their Institute, but they have also been of great assistance to me in the promotion of religion and piety, and have given great edification, as well to the faithful, as to non-Catholics or Protestants.

I, therefore, humbly petition that the aforesaid Sisters of my Diocese be permitted by Apostolic concession to enjoy all the favors, indulgences, and other spiritual privileges, which have been up to the present time granted to their Community of Le Mans.

MAURICE DE ST. PALAIS,
Bishop of Vincennes.

§ II.—DECREE.

Ex Audientia S. S^{mi}. diei 19 Junii, 1870.

Sanctissimus Dominus Noster Pius Divina Provida^a. P. P. IX referente me infrascripto, S. C. de Propaganda Fide Secret^o. memoratæ Congregationi Sororum Providentiæ in Diœcesi Vincennopolitana benigne concessit omnes indulgentias, favores, ac privilegias spiritualia quibus ex apostolico indulto fruitus eadem Congregatio in Civitate Cœnomanensi instituta.

Dat. Romæ ex Red. di S. C., die et anno ut supra.

Gratis sine ulla solutione quocumque titulo.

JOANNES SIMEONI, *Secrius*.

From the Audience of His Holiness on the 19th day of June, 1870.

Our Holy Father, by Divine Providence Pope Pius IX, having had the petition laid before him by me, the undersigned, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda, has graciously conceded to the aforementioned Community of the Sisters of Providence, in the Diocese of Vincennes, all the Indulgences, favors and spiritual privileges enjoyed, in virtue of Apostolical Indult, by the same Community established in the city of Le Mans.

Given at Rome from the Palace of the said Sacred Congregation on the day and the year above stated.

Gratis, without the least stipend, under any pretext whatever.

[L. S.]

JOHN SIMEONI, *Secretary*.





CONSTITUTIONS AND RULES

OF THE

Sisters of Providence of St. Mary's of the Woods.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE SPIRIT AND END WHICH THIS CONGREGATION
PROPOSES TO ITSELF.

1. The Congregation of Providence is a Society of pious ladies united in a common life, under the protection of the laws, and the authority of the Bishop of Vincennes, whom it acknowledges as its Superior, and to whom it is submissive as the representative of Jesus Christ upon earth.

2. The Sisters must distinguish themselves by a sincere attachment to the Holy See, by their submission to the decisions of the Church, by their respect for Bishops, especially for those in whose dioceses they are established.

3. The end proposed by this Congregation is to honor Divine Providence, by seconding its merciful views upon mankind, by devoting itself to the instruction of youth, and to the relieving of the unfortunate, whether at their homes, in prisons, or in hospitals.

4. The Spirit of the Congregation is a great zeal for the glory of God, an ardent desire to acquire perfection, and to contribute to the sanctification of the neighbor.

5. The Sisters will consecrate themselves to God according to the manner received among them, by the vows of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, and a special vow to instruct youth, and to serve the sick poor.

6. At the Mother-House, and in the large establishments, there can be Sisters Coadjutrix for the household duties. They will take no part in the government of the Congregation.

7. The Congregation is under the protection of the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, whom the Sisters have taken for models and patrons in all their houses.

8. The spiritual exercises of the Sisters consist in saying every day, in common, the morning and evening prayers, in making an hour of meditation or spiritual reading, in hearing Mass, making the particular and general examens, and saying the beads. The Choir Sisters recite the Office of the Blessed Virgin.

9. The Congregation having in view the sanctification of all mankind, the Sisters will be disposed to go to any part of the world where obedience may

call them, there to labor zealously according to the spirit of their Institute.

10. The Congregation of the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary's of the Woods is governed by a Superior General, assisted by a Particular and General Council, which, under the presidency of the Bishop of Vincennes or his Delegate, represent the entire Congregation for its government.

CONSTITUTIONS

OF THE

SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE.

11. The Constitutions of the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary's of the Woods are divided into three parts; the first treats of the government of the Congregation; the second, of the means which the Congregation employs, in order to form and sanctify subjects; and the third, of the means it employs to labor for the sanctification of mankind.

PART FIRST.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CONGREGATION.

CHAPTER I.—*Of the Elections in General.*

12. The elections will take place every three years at the epoch marked for the annual retreat. The Bishop of Vincennes will fix the day. On the

three days preceding the elections, all the Sisters will recite the "Veni Creator," with the prayer "Deus qui corda."

The time intervening between the elections may be a little more or a little less than three years, depending on the most convenient time for the retreat.

13. Nothing being of more importance for the Congregation than the choice of persons to govern it, the Sisters who are called upon to elect them should be sensibly penetrated with a spirit of abnegation, laying aside all sentiments of friendship, of inclination, and of antipathy, having nothing in view but the advantage of the Congregation, and conformity to its end.

14. If it were proved that a Sister had sought the office of Superior or Councillor, either for herself or for another, at the time of the elections or even long before, she would forfeit, by this act, the right to vote for, at least, six years, and she could never be elected to any office.

15. As soon as an election is regularly made, the Sisters who are designated for an office are obliged to accept it. They can never refuse without the consent of the Bishop of Vincennes.

16. All elections will be made by majority of votes.

CHAPTER II.—*Of the Government of the Congregation.*

17. The Congregation is governed by a Superior General, assisted by a Particular Council, consisting of five persons, viz: a First Assistant, a Second Assistant, a Mistress of Novices, a Procuratrix, and a Secretary.

18. There will also be a General Council, which will represent the entire Congregation. This Council will consist of twenty members, at least, including the members of the Particular Council. Above the first hundred, there will be one Councillor more for every ten professed Sisters.

19. The members of the Council were named for the first time by the Bishop of Mans. For the future, the Council will name the members necessary to complete the number required by the preceding article, and fill the vacancies occasioned by death, absence, or exclusion, the reasons for which will be explained elsewhere.

20. The Sisters constituting the General Council have alone the right of suffrage; they will make all the elections by majority of voices, as will be explained.

Nevertheless, a month previous to the elections, all the professed Sisters will be notified by a circular of the number of Councillors to be elected, and

will write on billets which they will seal, but not sign, the names of those whom they think most proper for the employments. These billets will neither be read nor opened but by the Bishop or his Delegate, in presence of the Council, and they will be burned immediately, in order that no one else shall see the writing.

CHAPTER III.—*Election of the Superior General.*

21. The Superior General should be chosen among those members of the Congregation who have been at least ten years professed. She is elected for three years, and she can be re-elected for a second triennial, if she has two-thirds of the votes, but not for a third, without a dispensation from the Bishop of Vincennes, which cannot be granted but for very important reasons, and with the advice of the General Council, in the absence of the deposed Superior, whose term of office has expired.

22. Upon the day fixed for the election, the Bishop or his Delegate, with two assistants, will make, in presence of the Community, the deposition of the Superior; he will receive from her the keys, the seal of the Congregation, and her pectoral cross; he will give her in return a cross like those worn

by the Sisters. He discharges her from the duties of her employment. After receiving his blessing, she goes to take her place among the Sisters according to rank.

23. He will celebrate the Mass of the Holy Ghost, after which he will convene the members of the Council, in the room appointed for the purpose, and make to them an exhortation; they will then proceed to the election.

24. The Secretary will distribute to each of the vocal Sisters a piece of blank paper of the same dimension, and each Sister, going into the chapel, will write privately, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, the name of the Sister whom she wishes to elect Superior General, then she will return and place (according to her rank) her vote in the urn, which will be upon the table before the President.

25. The eldest and the youngest of the Sisters who vote are of right Scrutineers.

26. When all the votes are deposited, the President will call upon the Scrutineers to approach the table, he will then overturn the urn which contains the votes, and count them, without opening them, in the presence of the Scrutineers and his Assistants, to see if the number equals the number of voters. If there be more or less than the exact number, the billets will be burned, and the election commenced anew.

27. The number of billets equalling the number of voters, the President will open them and show them to his Assistants and to the Scrutineers, and read them aloud. One of the Assistants and one of the Scrutineers will write the names of the Sisters designated, and will mark the number of votes that each obtained. If there be not a majority, it will be announced, and they will recommence the search, and continue to do so for three successive times, if necessary. After the third search, if there be not yet a majority, they will have recourse to ballotting between the two who have the most votes.

28. When the election is over, the President will announce the elected Sister, and install her immediately, as is marked in the ceremonial.

CHAPTER IV.—*Of the Election of the Particular Council.*

29. Immediately after the election of the Superior General, they will proceed to the election of the Particular Council, each member of which will be elected separately, and in the same manner as the Superior was, commencing by the First Assistant, then the Second Assistant, the Mistress of Novices, the Procuratrix, and the Secretary. However, should there be sufficient reason, the President can

postpone the election of all, or a part of the members of the Council to another hour of the day, or even until the next day.

30. The Superior whose term of office has expired cannot be elected a member of the Particular Council till she has been out of office for three years, unless by a dispensation from the Bishop of Vincennes, given with the advice of the General Council, and for important reasons.

31. To be a member of the Particular Council, it is required that the Sister be at least five years professed, and be judged by the electors to have the qualities necessary for the employment of which there is question.

32. They are elected for three years, like the Superior; but can always be re-elected.

33. The elections being ended, a verbal process will be drawn up, which will be signed by the elected Sisters, by the Assistants, the Scrutineers, and by the President.

34. If a member of the Particular Council would not acquit herself well of her office, the Superior General should assemble the other members of the Council, and deliberate with them upon what is best to be done, and will then make known this deliberation to the Bishop, who will either permit the Sister to remain in office after admonishing her, or

will pronounce her deposition. In the latter case, her employment will be taken from her by the Superior and given to another member of the Council, till the first general assembly.

CHAPTER V.—*Of the Election of the Members of the General Council.*

35. To be a member of the General Council, it is required that the Sister be at least five years professed, and actually at the head of an establishment.

The Superior whose term has expired can be elected a member of the General Council.

36. Two relations, in the first or second degree, cannot be members at the same time.

37. The General Council will be renewed partially every three years by the deposition of one third of its members, which third will be designated by lot for the first six years. (Ordinance of Aug. 31st, 1828.)

38. The Sisters deposed cannot be re-elected for three years.

39. Before proceeding to this election the President will have a list of all the Local Superiors who are eligible, and read it aloud.

40. After this, the voting will take place in the same manner as for the other elections, except that

each Sister who has the right to vote will write upon her ticket as many names as there are Councillors to elect. If, upon examining the votes, it be found that some have not the majority, the election will commence again for these only.

41. All the members of the General Council should come to the assembly at which the elections are made, unless prevented by some just cause, which must be made known with simplicity to the Superior, and by her to the Bishop or his Delegate.

42. The absence of some members, less than the third of the number, will not prevent the elections proceeding in the order established; but, if the third part, or more, be wanting, the first thing required is to organize the General Council, before electing the Superior and the members of the Particular Council.

43. If there should be some doubts relative to the propriety of a Sister's remaining a member of the General Council, she will be requested to absent herself from the room, and the Superior will then expose the case; after which, she will put it to votes, by beans black and white, whether or not said Sister is to retain her office, and will refer the decision to the Bishop, who will pronounce upon the case, as is observed for the Particular Council.

44. The same course will be observed in regard

to those Sisters who are not sufficiently justified in absenting themselves from the general assembly.

45. The Sisters whose time of office has expired will leave the assembly, and cannot take any part in the voting which is made to replace them.

CHAPTER VI.—*Functions of the Superior General.*

46. The Superior General is established to govern the Congregation according to the rules and spirit of the Institute. She should attend to its interests with all the zeal and devotedness of which she is capable.

47. While in office she bears the title of Mother, as she has in all respects the duties of one to fulfil. She must have, for all her Sisters, sentiments of regard, and she should endeavor to gain their confidence by a goodness which evinces both tenderness of heart and firmness of character. When once deposed she has no quality more than the other Sisters.

48. An interior life, fondness for meditation, an habitual union with God, zeal for perfection, a great fund of faith and piety, a perfect abnegation of self, prudence and wisdom in all her administrations, are the qualities by which she should be distinguished. She will avoid with care all particularity in what regards her clothing and nourishment. She will

take her meals in the refectory with the Community, will assist at the common exercises and, if she cannot be present, she will be replaced by one of her Assistants.

49. She is charged with the duty of watching to have the Rules and Constitutions faithfully observed throughout the entire Congregation. She can, however, dispense with some, in particular cases, according as the circumstances, the places, and the persons may make the dispensation necessary, having always in view the greater glory of God, and the greater good of souls. If there be question of a general dispensation, it cannot be granted but by the Bishop, with the advice of the Particular Council.

50. She will admit the young persons who present themselves for the novitiate, will fix the conditions for their entrance, the time of their probation, the studies to which they will apply, the places in which they will make them, the commencement of the novitiate and the taking of the habit. She will send away those who have not the requisite qualifications to remain. All this must be done in concert with her Particular Council, to whom she will expose clearly all that she knows upon each subject, and will not evince any desire to have her own personal sentiments prevail. If the majority of the Council are opposed to her, she will yield;

in case of an equal number of voices on each side, her voice decides.

51. She names, in concert with her Council, the Superior and officers of each establishment, and makes all the changes that are judged necessary.

52. She will be watchful to see that each Sister has what is necessary, both in regard to clothing and food. She will evince a particular charity for the sick and the infirm, taking care that they want for nothing, either for soul or body, which they may reasonably desire.

53. She will visit the establishments of the Congregation accompanied by an Assistant, or one of the professed Sisters, as often as she and her Council deem it necessary. She can, with the advice of her Council, delegate one of the Assistants to make the visitation; or even any professed Sister who is judged capable can be sent, having with her, if possible, a Sister as a companion.

54. She will read all the letters that are written by the Sisters, and also those that are addressed to them, except those that are written to the Bishop or received from him. In case the Bishop will name a Rev. Superior, the Sisters will have the same privilege in writing to him.

55. In case of sickness, indisposition, or absence of the Superior, the First Assistant will replace her

in the government of the house ; should she be prevented, the Second Assistant will govern, aided by the other members of the Council.

56. Should there be some interval, caused by any circumstance whatever, between the deposition of the Superior and her re-election, or the election of another, the same rule will be observed.

57. If through infirmity, bad conduct or accident, the Superior cannot with propriety keep her place, the Particular Council will make the case known to the Bishop, who will judge what is best to be done. He can maintain her in office or confer the authority on the First Assistant, whilst waiting for the general assembly, or call an extraordinary meeting of the Sisters who have the right of suffrage, and proceed immediately to a new election, which, however, can only be for the time the deposed Superior has yet to fill.

58. A Superior going out of office irreproachably, that is, without being deposed by the Bishop, or without censure, can make choice of the establishment which will suit her best to repose from the fatigue of government.

CHAPTER VII.—*Duties of the Particular Council.*

59. The officers who compose the Particular Council of the Superior General should give on all occasions an example of submission and respect

towards her, considering it a sacred duty to sustain her authority, and try to dispose minds and hearts in her favor.

60. The Superior will call an assembly of her Council, when she thinks proper, and fix the day and hour as it will best suit her. All the Sister officers are obliged to obey the summons with minds calm, having no personal interest in view, and without feelings of human respect or weakness.

61. The Superior will expose with simplicity the subject of deliberation, giving all the information in her power, and ask the advice of each individual Sister Councillor, commencing by the First Assistant, and ending with the Secretary. All must reply to her with candor and modesty, giving their opinions with freedom but without pretension, bitterness, or obstinacy, and without having the appearance of wishing to be noticed.

62. If there be a diversity of opinion, the majority will decide the case; should there be an equal number of voices on each side, the opinion of the Superior will decide.

63. Whenever there will be a question of a definitive decision, they will have recourse to the secret scrutiny, and the Superior will have two votes. Nevertheless, in cases of little importance, when all the Sisters are of the same opinion, they can dispense with this scrutiny.

64. The Sisters of the Council are rigorously obliged to secrecy upon all that is said in the Council, and upon the opinion that each member has given.

65. The Secretary will write upon the Council register all the important deliberations, which will be signed by the Superior and herself, after they have been read before the assembled Council.

CHAPTER VIII.—*Duties of the General Council.*

66. The General Council represents the entire Congregation, its decisions must be received with respect and submission by all the Sisters.

67. Besides the several elections that it alone has power to make, it decides upon the admission of Sisters to the profession, and upon the dismissal of those professed Sisters who, by their conduct, have become injurious to the Community.

68. It has the right, each time it is assembled, and at least every third year, to examine the accounts balanced by the Particular Council, and it must be consulted whenever there is question of any extraordinary expense.

69. The decisions of the Council are definitive only when approved by the Rev. Superior; they can never be revoked but by a new deliberation of the same Council and the consent of the Bishop of Vincennes.

70. The General Council has the right to assemble every third year at the epoch of the retreat; it can be convoked in extraordinary cases, by order of the Bishop, but, to be valid, all the Sisters who are members of it must be called, and at least two thirds be present.

CHAPTER IX.—*Of the Visitatrix.*

71. All the establishments will be visited at least once a year by the Superior General, one of the Assistants, or any professed Sister, having with her, if possible, another Sister as a companion.

72. As soon as the Visitatrix will have arrived in an establishment, all the keys will be delivered to her by the Local Superior, and, during her stay in the establishment, she will exercise all the authority, and the Sisters are obliged to obey her as they would the Superior General, whose place she holds, and she herself will give an example of perfect regularity.

73. After seeing the Sisters in common, she will see each one in particular, will endeavor to gain their confidence, and will exhort them to speak to her with freedom and candor upon all that regards the establishment, the observance of the rules, and their own personal wants; she will then keep chapter as is customary.

74. The Sisters are obliged to declare freely what they may have remarked, and to reply with candid simplicity to the questions that are addressed to them. Those who would fail in this duty become responsible before God for the consequences that result from their silence.

75. The Visitatrix will examine the classes, and assure herself whether the mode of teaching is in all respects such as the Superior General has prescribed. She will interrogate the children upon prayers, catechism, and the principles of reading, writing, grammar, &c., &c.

76. She will also examine if the boarders are properly taken care of, watched over, instructed, and their manners formed according to their rank, if their food is healthy and abundant, and if the Sisters fulfil towards them exactly the engagements made with the parents.

77. She will examine the register of receipts and expenses, balance the accounts, sign them, and impress on them the seal of the Congregation.

78. She will draw up a verbal process of all that she has remarked, in order to render an account of it to the Superior General and her Particular Council.

79. She will remain in each establishment only so long as it will be necessary to accomplish her

mission. Previous to her departure, she will assemble the Sisters and exhort them to an exact observance of the rules, and reprimand them with charity, but at the same time with firmness, upon the faults that have been made known to her, being very careful not to give any cause to suspect from whom she received the information.

80. The expense incurred by the visit of herself and companion will be charged to the establishment, except in some particular cases, of which the Superior General will be the judge.

CHAPTER X.—*Functions of the Local Superior.*

81. The Sister who is placed at the head of an establishment is invested with the authority necessary to govern it under the direction of the Superior General, to whom she is obliged to give an exact account of everything.

82. She must have, united to solid virtue, a profound knowledge of the spirit and the rules of the Congregation; she must show in her conduct great moderation and wisdom, be a model of regularity, and watch unceasingly to have the rules well observed in the establishment committed to her government. She must endeavor to gain the hearts and confidence of her companions by the example of her

virtues, and by testimonies of cordial affection, and she will do all in her power to promote that union, which should characterize the true Spouses of Jesus Christ, and cause it to reign among them.

83. She will extend her vigilance to all the inmates of the house; to the Sisters, to the boarders, and to the domestics, if there be any; to the classes, to the teaching, to the conduct, to the food, to the order, seeing that decency and modesty be observed; in a word, her vigilance must extend to all that pertains to the good education of young Christian females; remembering that God will require an account of all that has been confided to her.

84. She will receive, without complaint or murmur, the Sisters whom the Superior General, assisted by the Particular Council, sends her; she can, nevertheless, make some representations, but must always submit to the judgment of the Superior, and without censuring.

85. Besides the Local Superior, the Superior General, in union with her Particular Council, names for each establishment the assistant, if one is necessary, the directress of the boarders, and the teacher of the day-schools, the purchaser, and the Sisters-coadjutrix. The Local Superior names the other officers judged necessary, as the sacristine, refectorian, portress, and excitatrix.

86. Each Local Superior is obliged to make known to the Superior General everything relating to the establishment, not permitting her to be ignorant of any event that could enlighten her upon the conduct of the Sisters, and the temporal interest of the house; to this effect she will write to her at least every two months.

CHAPTER XI.—*Of the Relation between the Congregation and the Bishops.*

87. The principal house of the Congregation being in the diocese of Vincennes, the Bishop of this diocese is its Superior by right; the Sisters cannot be sent elsewhere without his consent, or the approbation of his Delegate, to whom he will have given authority to this effect. He never loses his jurisdiction over the Sisters, and he has always the power to recall them.

88. No establishment can be formed in the dioceses of other Bishops without the consent of these Bishops, to whom the Sisters owe respect, submission and obedience. When either they or their Delegates will visit them, they should evince much gratitude, rendering them due honor, presenting their boarders and day-scholars, and asking their blessing. They will hear their advice with attention, and endeavor to follow it.

89. The Superior General will render to them an account of the most interesting events that have taken place in the establishments which are in their dioceses, and advise with them upon the reforms that might seem necessary.

CHAPTER XII.—*Of the Intercourse between the Sisters and the Ecclesiastics.*

90. The Sisters must always act through a spirit of faith, and consider their pastors and other ecclesiastics as the ministers of Jesus Christ, never speaking to them but with the greatest respect, and always conducting themselves towards them with the most profound honor and deference.

91. If, unfortunately, they cannot avoid perceiving in them some defects, or even faults, they will lament this before God, but always preserve the same respect for their character.

92. The irreproachable character which the priests and Sisters should bear requires that there should be no familiarity between them, nor any intercourse that could excite suspicion. They will not visit each other except through necessity, never alone or in private, much less in the evening or at other undue hours.

93. The clergyman, in whose congregation the Sisters are, will be invited to visit the classes, at

least once a month, in order to excite emulation among the children, and to encourage the Sisters in their painful duty.

94. Should any disturbance or division take place between the pastor and his congregation, or between the ecclesiastics of the place and the neighboring ones, the Sisters will never take part with either, but will behave with politeness to both parties, grieving in secret on account of the evil, and never uttering but words of peace proper to reconcile their minds.

CHAPTER XIII.—*Duties of the Congregation towards Benefactors.*

95. The Sisters will endeavor to practice the virtue of gratitude, as persons of their holy profession should. They will treat the benefactors of the Congregation with honor, and they will fulfil with fidelity the conditions made in the acts of donation.

96. At the death of a principal benefactor of the Congregation, the funeral service will be performed, and four low Masses said for him at the Mother-House, and the Sisters residing at that house will offer two communions for him.

97. At the death of the founder, or of a principal benefactor of one of the establishments, the Sisters belonging to the establishment will have two low

Masses said for him, and will make two communions for him; and during eight days they will add the “De profundis” to the evening prayers for the repose of his soul.

98. At the death of the Bishop of Vincennes, the funeral service will be performed, and nine low Masses said for him at the Mother-House; at each of the establishments a low Mass will be said for him; during thirty days five “Our Fathers” and “Hail Marys” will be said in each establishment at the conclusion of the morning and evening prayers for the same intention. All will make three communions for the repose of his soul.

99. At the death of the other Bishops, the establishments which are in their respective dioceses will fulfil the same duties, that is to say, will have a low Mass said, &c., &c.

100. At the death of a father or mother of a Sister, there will be a low Mass said at the establishment in which the Sister resides, and all the Sisters of that establishment will offer a communion for the repose of the soul.

CHAPTER XIV.—*Of New Establishments.*

101. When a new establishment will be proposed, from whatever quarter the proposal may come, the Superior General will take the advice of the Par-

ticular Council on the subject; she will then give information of it to the Bishop of Vincennes, who will pronounce whether or not the proposal will be accepted. If there is a Rev. Superior named by the Bishop, it is to him she will address herself. She must also know the will of the Bishop, in whose diocese the new establishment will be, and obtain his consent.

102. Though the Congregation proposes to itself, before all things else, the glory of God and the salvation of souls, still, prudence does not permit accepting new establishments, without having a certainty of the Sisters being suitably lodged, with the necessary furniture, and a revenue sufficient to support them according to the rules of the Congregation. No mission will be formed where the Superior cannot send at least two Sisters.

103. When a new establishment will be accepted, there will be two copies of an agreement drawn up, in which will be stipulated the reciprocal conditions, in order to avoid, as much as possible, the inconveniences that time and change might effect.

104. The Sisters will not neglect to comply with all the formalities required to secure the approbation of the new establishment, and give it a legal existence.

PART SECOND.

OF THE MEANS THE CONGREGATION EMPLOYS TO FORM
AND SANCTIFY ITS SUBJECTS.

CHAPTER I.—*Of the Postulants.*

105. All the postulants who aspire to the happiness of consecrating themselves to God in this Congregation must have certain qualities, some exterior, others interior.

FOR THE EXTERIOR.

106. They must be the offspring of legitimate marriage, belonging to a moral family, and having a good reputation.

107. They must have a good constitution and enjoy good health, being free from maladies either of mind or body which would render them unfit for the various duties of the Congregation.

108. The state of widowhood is not considered as an absolute impediment, nevertheless such subjects are less suitable than virgins, and should only be admitted when they offer advantages which compensate for the defect.

109. Those who have failed in point of honor, or those who have tried their vocation in another religious house, can never be received. In the latter case, however, the Bishop can allow them to be received, for good reasons, and with the approbation of the Particular Council.

FOR THE INTERIOR.

110. It is necessary that those who desire to embrace this holy Institute be neither inclined to melancholy, to dissipation, nor lightness of character, that they have a good spirit, an upright mind, with a disposition candid and submissive to the will of the Superiors; amiable and conciliating, capable of union of heart and mind. They must be judged capable of instructing youth, and taking care of the sick, or at least show an aptitude for acquiring what they do not possess.

111. They must have a good intention, proposing to themselves only the glory of God, their own perfection, and the sanctification of others; being always ready to renounce themselves, and to practice on all occasions a religious indifference for the places and employments in which obedience may place them.

CHAPTER II.—*Of the Probation of Postulants.*

112. When a postulant will appear to have the dispositions requisite, the Superior General, with the advice of the Particular Council, can admit her to the probation.

113. An exact account will be taken of what she brought with her, linen, clothes, goods, or money, so that all may be returned to her, should she not

persevere, deducting, however, the expenses of her boarding.

114. The postulants will be under the direction of the Mistress of Novices, they will assist at the conferences, instructions, and other spiritual exercises of the Novices; they will not have private or particular conversations, except with their Mistress, to whom they will open their hearts freely, endeavoring to make themselves known to her such as they are, exteriorly and interiorly, that their vocation may be the more surely known.

115. To test their courage, the temper of their minds, and the degree of their good will, the Mistress will exercise them, according to her prudence, in acts of humility, mortification, poverty, and obedience, and she will observe carefully how they acquit themselves of them.

116. Three months after the entrance of a postulant, or after a longer period, the Particular Council will deliberate upon her admission to the novitiate, or upon her dismissal; if she be admitted, she will be associated to the novices; if not, she will be sent away immediately.

CHAPTER III.—*Novitiate.*

117. The novices will wear the secular dress at least a year; they may wear it longer if the Superior and her Council deem it proper.

118. When they appear sufficiently proved, the Council will deliberate upon their taking the habit; the majority of voices will decide the case.

119. After the ceremony of taking the habit, they will continue their novitiate at the Mother-House, or in some particular establishment, under the direction of the Local Superior, if the Superior General thinks it proper.

120. The entire time of the novitiate, including the time before taking the habit, is three years.

121. Besides the exercises common to all the Community, the novices will have some special ones, such as conferences, instructions, and manifestations of their interior to their Mistress.

Every means will be taken to form them to religious virtue, and to make them capable of fulfilling the duties of their profession.

122. Nothing being more important in a religious Congregation than a perfect union of views and means, the novices will not have any particular practices of piety; if they had any previous to entering the Community, they will make them known to their Mistress; should she think it proper for them to be abandoned, they will submit without hesitation. Their devotion must be simple and without affectation.

CHAPTER IV.—*Of the Dismissal of the Novices.*

123. Previous to taking the habit, the novices can be sent away by the Superior General, in union with her Particular Council; but after they have received the habit, they cannot be sent previous to the assembling of the General Council at the retreat, and at least one-half of the Council should consent to it, and the Bishop of Vincennes or the Rev. Superior of the Community will pronounce the dismissal.

124. The principal reasons for which novices can be sent away either before taking the habit, or before making the profession, are: 1st. The faults for which they would not have been admitted to the novitiate had they been known. 2nd. The little hope of their ever being useful to the Community. 3d. The fear that they will become a charge upon it. 4th. Infirmities appearing upon them which cause fear for the future. 5th. A gloomy, harsh, peevish, irritable disposition. 6th. Some engagement which they contracted in the world and did not fulfil. 7th. Some maladies which belong to their families and are generally inherited, as humors of the blood that are dangerous and contagious, epilepsy, insanity, &c., &c.

125. When a novice is to be sent away, the Superior will make use of every suitable means neither

to offend her nor to injure her character, that, when leaving, she will have nothing against the Community, but, on the contrary, will be forced to do it justice, and remain attached to it.

CHAPTER V.—*Of the Engagement of the Sisters.*

126. Three years after their entrance into the Novitiate, the Sisters will be proposed to the General Council to be admitted to the profession ; if the majority of the Council receives them, they will make for five years the vows of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, and of employing themselves in instructing youth and serving the sick. They will renew these vows every five years. They can make perpetual vows with the permission of the Bishop, or his Delegate, and that of the Superior General.

127. Before making their profession, the Sisters who are in the establishments will return to the novitiate in order to renew in themselves the spirit of fervor, and to prepare themselves well for this great action.

128. Though they make the engagement but for five years, they should not embrace this holy state, but with the intention of remaining always in it, and never returning to the world.

129. As soon as they have made their profession they are members of the Community, and have a

right to remain in it till death, as well in sickness as in health.

130. Nevertheless, should they become guilty of some grievous fault, calculated to dishonor the Congregation, such as theft, drunkenness, impurity or cabal, with the consent of the General Council and the permission of the Bishop, they could be excluded from the Society they have so grievously offended. If the case be pressing, the opinion of the General Council may be obtained by writing.

131. In this case, and in the case of a Sister leaving the Community of her own accord, for what reason soever, she cannot reclaim what she may have given, nor can she ever enter it again.

CHAPTER VI.—*Of the Vow of Poverty.*

132. The Vow of Poverty in this Congregation neither deprives the Sisters of the possession of the properties they have, nor of the power to receive such as fall to them by inheritancé, or come to them as donations; but they cannot dispose of them in any manner without the permission of the Superior General.

133. This Vow exacts from them the real practice of poverty, according as they will find themselves in various circumstances. They must observe

it in their food, in their clothing, in their furniture, and by showing themselves detached from everything.

134. They cannot appropriate to themselves anything belonging to the Community, nor can they keep, give, buy, sell, lend or borrow anything without the permission of the Superior. They cannot receive any gift for themselves personally, but only for the establishment, under the title of alms.

CHAPTER VII.—*Of the Vow of Chastity.*

135. The perfect chastity of which the Sisters make profession is a delicate and precious virtue, which should be their most beautiful ornament before God and man. They should love and guard it with a vigilance ever watchful, remembering that persons consecrated to God must be chaste in their words, in their actions, in their deportment, in a word, in every respect; in such a manner that they may be regarded as angels descended from heaven upon earth. The Sisters will take the greatest care never to wound this celestial virtue, even in the slightest degree, and never to give occasion for the least suspicion against it to rest upon them.

CHAPTER VIII.—*Of the Vow of Obedience.*

136. It is Obedience especially that constitutes the religious life, because it immolates the person entirely, and causes that perfect abnegation to be practiced, which Jesus Christ has recommended as the foundation of a perfect life.

137. Obedience consists in having no will of our own, and in considering those who are lawfully constituted our Superiors as invested with the authority of God, and, in this view, respecting and honoring them, being submissive to them both in mind and heart, and doing with promptness, without complaint or murmur, whatever they require of us.

138. The Sisters will endeavor then to acquire this virtue in an eminent degree, and be constantly disposed to do all that will be required of them without any reserve, and as much as possible without repugnance, even in performing duties the most painful to nature, being well convinced that for them there is no other way to perfection.

139. Respectful representations not being essentially opposed to the Vow of Obedience, the Sisters are permitted to make them with humility; they must, however, be always ready to do what may be prescribed them, and obey with simplicity, promptitude and joy, sacrificing willingly their opinions, their inclinations, and their judgment.

CHAPTER IX.—*The Vow to Employ Themselves in Instructing Youth and in Taking Care of the Sick.*

140. Besides the three Vows of religion, the Sisters will engage themselves to go, and to remain, in what place soever they may be sent, and to fulfil, as far as required, the duties that will be given to them, employing themselves zealously in instructing youth and taking care of the sick.

141. They will entertain an exalted idea of the price of souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and an ardent desire of contributing to their salvation, making use for this end of every means that a tender, compassionate, attentive, and generous zeal can dictate; being neither timid nor bold, never yielding to human respect, nor being discouraged on account of refusals or uncivil language.

CHAPTER X.—*Of the Exercises of the Day.*

142. The Sisters will rise in all seasons at five o'clock. A little before half-past five, they will commence the morning prayers, which must last but a few minutes; immediately after, they will make half-an-hour's meditation. At six o'clock

they will recite the office of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

143. They will assist at Mass every day, if not lawfully prevented; when unable to assist at it, they will unite their intention.

144. At a quarter past seven o'clock, they will take breakfast, which should last about fifteen minutes. After which, each Sister will attend to her employment.

145. All will make the particular examen every day upon some virtue or some vice, according to their personal wants.

The quarter immediately before twelve o'clock is the time appointed, when employments do not prevent.

146. At twelve o'clock the dinner will be in common in the refectory; half-an-hour is the time allotted for it. At the Mother-House, and in the establishments where there are at least six persons, either Sisters or Sisters and boarders, there will be reading during the whole time employed in taking the repast. At the establishments which have not this number, it will suffice to read a short life of a Saint at the commencement, and some verses in the Following of Christ at the end.

147. The recreation after dinner will last till half-past one o'clock; during this time the Sisters

will be employed in some useful work, observing great modesty, and taking care not to wound charity, and not to let it be wounded by those under their charge.

148. At four o'clock they will recite Vespers and Complies. At six o'clock the chaplet, which will be followed by half-an-hour spent in spiritual reading and meditation, to which all the Sisters will attend who are not prevented by the duties of their employment.

149. At seven o'clock supper, during which there will be reading as at dinner, except in the small establishments, where they will read only four or five verses from the New Testament at the end of the meal. After supper there will be recreation.

150. At half-past eight, they will recite matins and lauds, say the evening prayers, and read the subject of the next morning's meditation; all the Sisters should be in bed a quarter of an hour after the evening exercise.

151. From the end of the evening recreation till after the morning office the next day, the profound silence will be kept, and all must observe it most strictly.

N. B.—By permission of the Bishop, the supper hour may be earlier in those establishments where the Superior judges it proper.

CHAPTER XI.—*Of the Chapter.*

152. The Chapter is established to assist the Sisters to correct their imperfections by the humble acknowledgement they will make of them, and by the advice they will receive. They will then be very exact to attend it with a sincere desire to correct themselves.

153. At the Mother-House, and in the establishments where there are at least three Sisters, the Chapter will be kept every two weeks, and ordinarily on Sunday. It will commence by the “Veni Sancte;” the Sisters will take their places according to rank. The Superior will make an exhortation, or a short spiritual reading; then the Sisters will kneel respectfully before the Superior (commencing by the postulants and novices), and accuse themselves humbly of their exterior faults, and of their non-observance of the rules.

154. The Superior will impose upon each a light penance, proper, however, to make a salutary impression, and to correct her.

155. After the postulants and novices have received their penances, they will retire; then the professed Sisters (first the youngest, afterwards the others, ascending according to rank) will make their accusations and receive their penances; the exercise will finish with the “Sub tuum.”

CHAPTER XII.—*Of the Ordinary and Extraordinary Confessor*

156. There will be but one ordinary confessor for each house, that all the Sisters may follow the same direction, and by this means have more surely among them a union of sentiments. The confessor will be named by the Bishop in whose diocese the establishment is; he should be well instructed, prudent, zealous, and full of charity.

157. If it should happen that a confessor does not suit the majority of the Sisters, the Superior will make the case known to the Bishop, who will see what is best to be done.

158. There will be every three months one or several extraordinary confessors who will be named by the Bishop, and all the Sisters are obliged to present themselves. In case of necessity, the Sisters can have recourse to the extraordinary confessor more frequently.

159. If a Sister who is dangerously sick asks for an extraordinary confessor, he will be sent for.

160. The Sisters will not speak among themselves of their confessor, of confessions, nor of the time that each one takes to make her confession; to this they will pay no attention.

161. The ordinary confessor of an establishment will lodge in a house situated beyond the inclosure

in which the house of the Sisters is; the amount of his salary will be regulated by the advice of the Bishop, or that of the Rev. Superior of the Community, if there be one.

162. The Sisters will go to confession ordinarily once a week, and they will endeavor to acquit themselves of that duty with exactitude, after a suitable preparation, with the intention to profit by it; they will, nevertheless, avoid minutiae and scruple.

CHAPTER XIII.—*Of Communion.*

163. The Sisters should distinguish themselves by a tender love for Jesus, their divine Spouse, and burn continually with the desire of uniting themselves to Him in holy communion.

164. They will communicate regularly on Sundays, on festivals on which there is a public office, on the feasts of our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, and of the Apostles, and on the Thursdays of each week. They can also communicate on Tuesdays, and on some remarkable festivals, if the confessor permits it, but not more frequently without the permission of the Superior General. The confessor or the Superior of an establishment can always suspend the communion when either of them judges it proper.

165. The communions marked for the dead are of rule.

166. One communion will be made every month by each Sister for the benefactors, living and dead, and for the wants of the Community.

167. The particular intention in the other communions is at each one's own disposal.

CHAPTER XIV.—*Of Some Religious Virtues in Particular.*

ON HUMILITY.

168. Humility being the foundation of all Christian virtues, and more particularly of religious perfection, the Sisters will endeavor to practice it in its greatest extent. They will neither seek nor desire the esteem of others, nor solicit for any employment; but they will accept joyfully the most humiliating, if they are named for them.

169. They will avoid speaking of themselves, of their relations, and of everything which is of a nature to flatter their vanity; they will never act towards their companions, nor any one else, in a manner to show they think themselves superior to them, nor will they speak of any advantage they may have possessed in the world, nor of their education, their talents, nor anything of the kind.

170. They will appear to forget willingly the services they may have rendered to the Community, or to the establishment, by their wealth, their abilities, their zeal, or their devotedness; they will attribute nothing of all this to themselves, because, in reality, of ourselves we are nothing, and can do nothing.

OF MORTIFICATION.

171. The Sisters will lead exteriorly a common life; they will not be subject to any practices of penance but such as are prescribed to all the faithful; they can, nevertheless, impose upon themselves some which would be judged useful for their spiritual advancement, but with moderation, with the advice of their confessor, and never without the permission of the Superior General, if the penances are exterior and of long duration.

172. They will, on the contrary, apply themselves constantly to acquire the habit of mortifying their senses, both exterior and interior, watching continually over themselves, seeking neither pleasures, enjoyments, nor satisfactions; bearing the mortification of Jesus Christ in their flesh, as St. Paul says; showing on all occasions the most perfect abnegation of themselves, correcting and reforming their inclinations, their humor, their character, and endeavoring in all things to resemble Jesus Christ, their divine model.

OF THE LOVE OF GOD AND OF THEIR NEIGHBOR.

173. The perfection of the Christian law is charity; therefore, the Sisters, in order to be faithful to their vocation, must fulfil, in all their extent, these two great commandments, which contain the substance of the old and of the new law, viz: the love of God and of the neighbor. This double love should reign in the Sisters to such a degree that, on seeing them, no one could doubt their being entirely penetrated with it.

OF UNION AMONG THEMSELVES.

174. The Sisters will consider themselves as members of the same body, as children of the same family, who should have the same affections, and hold the same language. They will banish from their conversations all bitter words, cold and unkind manners, diversity of opinions, and obstinate adherence to their own sentiments, as so many sources of discord. They will honor one another reciprocally, and speak to one another with affability and warmth of affection, without allowing any change or alteration to be perceived in their conduct. If there be not a sympathy of feeling among them, they will have recourse to God, and endeavor to correct nature by grace; in this case, they will remember what the Apostle says: that we must bear with one

another; and what Jesus Christ himself says: that we are often more apt to see a straw in the eyes of our brother than a beam in our own.

175. They will not evince a preference for one more than another, they will avoid carefully all particular friendship, that the charity which should unite them may be supernatural and without defect.

176. If a Sister should have the misfortune to offend another Sister by a disobliging word, an unkind tone, or manner of acting, she should not fail to ask her forgiveness before the end of the day. They will be most merciful to one another, pardoning one another reciprocally from the bottom of their hearts.

OF SILENCE.

177. Besides the great silence of which we have spoken, and which the Sisters are required to keep from the end of the evening recreation till after the morning office, they will have habitually the spirit of recollection, speaking during the course of the day only through charity, politeness or necessity, and always in a moderate tone of voice; they will also avoid making a noise by walking heavily, and in opening and shutting the doors.

OF MODESTY.

178. If all religious females, consecrated to God, should distinguish themselves by an exemplary

modesty, the Sisters of Providence, destined to live in the midst of the world and its contagion, have a much greater obligation to preserve this exterior reserve, which will cause their virtue to be respected, and shield them from many dangers. They will then watch carefully over themselves, and never allow anything in their looks, in their words, in their demeanor, nor in their proceedings, which could evince levity or dissipation, a fondness or attraction for the world; but their entire deportment must be grave, religious, and celestial; spreading the good odor of Jesus Christ, and edifying everyone.

CHAPTER XV.—*Of the Retreat.*

179. During each year there will be one or several retreats for the Sisters, at the time which will be most convenient for them to repair to the place where it will be given.

180. The Sisters will be called to attend it by a circular letter, in which the Superior General will name the Sisters who are to assist at it; those who are not called will make a particular retreat during the vacation at the establishment in which they are employed.

181. In these retreats the Sisters will examine

seriously what they should have been, what they have been, and what they must be for the future. They will make a review of the faults they have committed since their last retreat, renew themselves in the spirit of God, and draw from thence new strength to acquit themselves more efficaciously of their duties.

182. During the exercises of a retreat a most profound silence will reign in the house in which it is given, because the Holy Spirit will not communicate himself to dissipated souls. The Sisters will be allowed, however, an hour of relaxation after dinner and after supper; if they are obliged to speak, they must do it in a low tone, and avoid making any noise.

183. The retreat will terminate by a general communion; the professed Sisters will renew their vows, in order to animate themselves more with the desire to keep them well; on the same day, the Bishop, if he be present, or his Delegate, will read the list of obediences, giving thus, to each Sister, in the name of God, the mission she is to fulfil. If neither the Bishop nor his Delegate be present, the Superior General will give these missions; she has the right to do so, in virtue of her office.

CHAPTER XVI.—*Of the Feasts of the Congregation.*

184. The Sisters of Providence being specially under the protection of the Holy Family, they will celebrate as patronal festivals the Nativity of our Savior, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, and the Feast of St. Joseph.

185. They will also have a particular devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to the holy Angels, the Apostles, St. Ignatius, St. Vincent of Paul, St. Francis de Sales, St. Francis Xavier, St. Ann, St. Theresa, and St. Aloysius de Gonzaga. These feasts will be communion days of rule.

CHAPTER XVII.—*Of the Instruction of the Sisters.*

186. The end of the Congregation being the instruction of young females and the care of the sick, the Sisters will apply themselves, both in the novitiate and in the establishments, to acquire the knowledge that will render them capable of fulfilling perfectly these duties.

187. They will learn, in the best manner they can, Religion and its principles, also the best manner to teach them, the principles of reading, writing, English grammar, arithmetic, geography, history, and the different kinds of manual work, suitable to the persons whom they have to instruct.

188. Those who are to learn or to teach the ornamental branches, as music and drawing, will be named by the Superior General, and no one can apply to them without her permission.

189. They will endeavor to acquire a knowledge of the ordinary diseases, and of the remedies proper to apply whilst waiting for the physician, for whom they will be the first to ask if the sickness appears dangerous.

190. They will study the elements of pharmacy, and how to compound remedies, so far as necessary to render their services useful to the sick.

CHAPTER XVIII.—*Of Travelling.*

191. The Sisters will never travel, but by the order of the Superior General, or with her permission; they will not be permitted to go alone, unless through necessity.

192. In whatever place they may be, or before whatever persons they may have to appear, they must conduct themselves with such modesty as to inspire respect and piety.

193. If they are obliged to lodge in a hotel, they will ask for a private room, and to be served there; they will not eat with seculars unless it be difficult to do otherwise.

194. They will not engage in any controversy, even to defend a good cause. They will remain silent, and their reserve will be more eloquent than their discourse could have been.

195. They will never omit their exercises of piety under pretext of traveling, unless there be a moral impossibility of performing them.

196. They will not obtain permission to visit their relatives, except for important affairs, and the expenses of the journey will be charged to the family.

197. They will not even visit the Sisters of other establishments without the permission of the Superior General. When two or more establishments are near to each other, the Superior can grant this permission in a manner more or less general, according to her prudence.

CHAPTER XIX.—*Of Food.*

198. The food of the Sisters will be healthy and frugal, prepared according to the most generally approved taste and custom, however, without any attention to delicacy.

199. It will be composed of meat from the market, poultry, fish, eggs, milk-food, salads, and vegetables of all kinds; the bread will be good, and nothing will be served that is spoiled.

200. On fasting days, an extra dish will be served, and the food will be varied as much as possible.

201. The table utensils, the linen, and all appertaining to the table, will be simple, but kept in great neatness.

202. The Sisters must never fail to repair to the refectory to take their meals, except with permission from the Superior, and they will observe great temperance, especially in drink.

CHAPTER XX.—*Of Dress.*

203. The dress of the Sisters will be poor, simple, and uniform for the color and the quality of the stuff, which will be of black wool.

204. The habit will extend as far as two fingers from the neck, and descend an inch from the ground in front, and half an inch behind; the waist will be of a suitable length, and the sleeves will be from nineteen to twenty-two inches in width, including the seams.

205. The handkerchief for the neck will be of white cotton from $47\frac{1}{2}$ to $49\frac{1}{2}$ inches square. Each Sister will wear on her neck a crucifix of white bone, two and a half inches in length; the Superior General will wear one of three inches, bearing this

inscription, "Superior General." They will wear at the right side a chaplet composed of large beads, with a cross, four inches long, and two medals.

206. The cap worn by the Sisters will be made of white cotton, trimmed with thick muslin, having for the front seven inches in width, comprising a hem eight lines, over which will be worn a black veil, falling upon the shoulders, the size of which will be in proportion to the height of the person. The shortest will not be less than $23\frac{3}{4}$ inches, the longest will not exceed $33\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length.

207. The linen used by the Sisters will be of moderate quality; they will wear stockings of black wool or dark cotton, and petticoats of black stuff.

208. In winter, when they go out, they will wear black cloaks, or black shawls of moderate quality.

209. They will wear aprons of blue cotton at home, but take them off when they go out.

210. All the clothes will be in common, nothing but size or contagious sickness can cause this rule to be dispensed with.

CHAPTER XXI.—*Of Furniture.*

211. The furniture of the Sisters will be neat but simple, and conformable to poverty. The chambers will not be papered, nor adorned in a

manner that savors of vanity. They will not have costly pictures, nor gilded frames, but only a crucifix, some engravings of piety, a press, a bedstead, a straw bed, a mattress, a pillow, curtains, with two or three common chairs.

212. The room destined for the reception of strangers will also be furnished with religious simplicity, yet in a manner suitable to its destination, and according to the nature of the establishment.

CHAPTER XXII.—*Of the Sick Sisters.*

213. The Sisters will endeavor to be, during their sickness, models of resignation and patience, that they may edify all who are with them, and also those who visit them.

214. They will follow with perfect docility the prescriptions of the physicians, whom they will honor; still, they will put their confidence especially in God, who disposes of us as He pleases, and to whose holy will they must manifest on all occasions an absolute submission.

215. They will consider the infirmities and sickness of languor as the most efficacious means to purify them, to detach them from the present life, and to prepare them for the judgment which will decide their eternal lot. In sickness they will pre-

serve the spirit of recollection, and exercise themselves in the other religious virtues ; they will not omit the exercises of the rule that are compatible with their state of suffering, and they must have no uneasiness about those they cannot perform.

216. They will go to confession frequently during their illness, in order to preserve more surely their tranquillity of soul, and not to lose any of the merits they have it in their power to gain.

CHAPTER XXIII.—*Of the Decease of the Sisters.*

217. When a Sister is dangerously sick, she will be prepared early, and with all the prudence that charity can suggest, to receive the last Sacraments. According as her last moments approach, without however fatiguing her, care will be redoubled to make her enter into or preserve the dispositions that will render her death precious in the sight of God.

218. As much as possible, care will be taken to recite in time the prayers of the agonizing, and, in case the dying Sister has still her knowledge, to say some words to her proper to sustain her confidence in the combat.

219. As soon as she will have expired, the Sisters will say, near the corpse, the “ Miserere,” the “ De

profundis," with "the recommendation of the soul." The Sisters will assemble in the chapel, if there be one in the establishment, to recite the office of the dead or make the Way of the Cross for the repose of her soul.

220. On the day of her interment there will be a funeral service, all the Sisters will communicate, if possible, and assist at the burial. They will carry lighted tapers in their hands.

221. Each establishment will have a low Mass said for her, and will make the recommendation of her soul, at the morning and evening prayers, and recite the "De profundis" for her during eight days. Each Sister will offer three communions and three chaplets for her.

222. At the establishment in which the Sister died there will be said, at the morning and evening prayers, and in the classes of the children, during nine days, five times the "Our Father" and "Hail Mary," with the "De profundis."

PART THIRD.

OF THE MEANS TO LABOR FOR THE SANCTIFICATION
OF OUR NEIGHBOR.CHAPTER I.—*Of the Instruction of Youth.*

223. The principal end of the Congregation being to instruct young girls and form them to virtue, it assumes the charge of educating young ladies belonging to families in easy circumstances, and giving them instructions suitable to their rank; it also takes charge of instructing the children of the poor, for whom the Sisters will entertain a tender charity.

224. They will be admitted in the establishment as day-scholars, half-boarders, or boarders. The Superior General will designate the houses in which the boarding-schools will be kept, and give the necessary teachers.

225. It is she, also, who indicates the plan of instruction to be pursued, and the teachers must conform to her directions.

226. Very young children will not be received as boarders without the permission of the Superior General.

CHAPTER II.—*Of Visiting the Sick at their own Homes.*

227. The secondary end which the Congregation proposes to itself, in regard to the neighbor, is to give assistance and comfort to the sick poor. The Sisters will fulfil this duty in an ardent spirit of charity and devotedness, redoubling their care and tenderness for those who are the most abandoned; distributing to them, or procuring for them, as much possible, all they need, such as remedies, soups, clothes, and consolations of all kinds.

228. They will have a dispensary in each establishment, and they will give remedies to the poor gratuitously, but will require a moderate price from the rich, and with this sum they will supply the dispensary.

229. They will never accept anything from the poor for the visits they make them, nor for the services they render to them; they must expect their recompense only from God. If they are called to visit the rich, they will neither refuse to go, nor to give their advice, but they will ask nothing for themselves, neither directly nor indirectly. They may, however, receive, under the title of alms, what may be offered through gratitude, and they will apply it to the dispensary for the poor.

230. When the sickness appears dangerous, the Sisters will have the physician called, and they will never act contrary to his prescriptions, nor blame his treatment.

CHAPTER III.—*Of Hospitals.*

231. The Congregation will take charge of hospitals of all kinds, and will govern them under the superintendence of the administrative commission of each locality. They will have surveillance and authority over the sick, the orphans, the old, the infirm, and other persons in the hospital, over the domestics and all the subalterns of the house.

232. All the persons hired in the hospital will be chosen by the Superior, and accepted by the administrative commission. The dismissal will also be pronounced by the administrators, if the Superior finds it necessary.

233. The Sisters will conform to the regulations of each house for the rations and distribution of provisions, and in all that relates to their functions; they will follow exactly the prescriptions of the physician, and see that they be followed by all under their authority.

234. The Sisters will not hesitate to render the most disgusting services to the sick, surmounting

all repugnance by their love for Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, they will observe with care the rules of modesty and decorum, avoiding all that could wound the chastity of a Christian virgin. The Sisters must be particularly cautious in their attendance on men. They will endeavor to have infirmarians of both sexes, of mature age, worthy of confidence, to whom they can confide these cares; in cases of true necessity, charity will be above all other considerations, but their intention must be upright, and their hearts pure before God.

235. The Sisters will be careful to see that the contractors and trustees fulfil the conditions of their engagements, that the economy and good order of the house be maintained, that neatness be preserved in all the employments, that propriety of conduct be observed; they will neglect nothing to induce those under their charge to live Christianly, and will prepare the sick for a holy death.

CHAPTER IV.—*Of Prisons.*

236. In assuming the charge of prisons, the end proposed by the Congregation is not merely to relieve the prisoners in their corporal necessities, but much more, to withdraw them from the sad state into which they have ordinarily been led by ignorance and disorderly passions. The Sisters

will, therefore, endeavor to make them learn the morning and evening prayers, the commandments of God and of the Church, the principles of religion, and all that is necessary for them to know in order to be saved. They will prepare them to make a good confession, will exhort them to receive all their sufferings with patience and submission, and in a spirit of penance. In all cases, the Sisters will endeavor to edify them by the practice of a perfect life.

237. The Sisters will have charge of the infirmary, of the wardrobe, and of all that belongs to the clothing of the prisoners, and the bedding; they will see that the food, the wood, the coal, the soap, &c., are distributed with justice, observing carefully that each one has what is allowed by the rule, both in regard to quantity and quality; also, that those who furnish the supplies fulfil the conditions of their engagements; in a word, they will attend at the same time to the interests of the prisoners and of the administration, according to the rules of justice, and with the feeling of warm and extensive charity.

238. The Sisters will not prepare food for the prisoners who have the means to pay; they will not sell tobacco, drinks, nor anything whatever; their care must be entirely gratuitous.

239. They will distribute, with discretion and prudence, the alms confided to them, giving to all according to their need, without any partiality.

CHAPTER V.—*Conduct of the Sisters towards Seculars.*

240. The Sisters, bearing in mind that they are virgins consecrated to God, dispersed through the world, must watch over themselves more vigilantly than the religious who live in the retirement of their convents. Their words, their actions, their proceedings should bear the character of holiness, and they should show by their conversation that their thoughts are in heaven. To effect this they will recall to mind continually the rules that treat particularly of modesty.

241. They will avoid paying or receiving unnecessary visits, charity alone will warrant them to do either.

242. If a man visits them, whoever he may be, a Sister will avoid remaining alone with him, that no cause for censure may be given.

243. They will always maintain a well regulated exterior, their conversation should be characterized by mildness, cordiality, and charity; they will not judge nor speak ill of any one, never taking part in

any dissensions; they will not occupy themselves with the opinions of others, especially on political subjects; they will freely acknowledge that these debates are not suitable to their state, and that they should apply to what will aid them in the fulfilment of their obligations as Sisters of Charity.

244. They will not stop to speak with persons on the street, nor in the road, unless through necessity.

245. They will never take part in private family affairs, especially in what may relate to marriages.



RULES OF THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE

OF

ST. MARY'S OF THE WOODS.

246. The Constitutions establish the principles of the government of the Congregation, and unite all the Sisters in one religious body. The Rules point out the duties, both general and particular, of all the members.

CHAPTER I.—*Duties towards Themselves.*

247. Each Sister will employ to the best of her power the time marked for the examine of conscience, the spiritual reading, prayer, and especially meditation.

248. All will assist at Mass every day, if not necessarily prevented, and will hear the instructions that will be given at the church.

249. They will go to confession at the time appointed, and to the confessor named, and not to others without the permission of the Superior General.

250. They will renew their vows once every

year, after making a retreat of eight days and a review of their faults.

251. To prepare themselves for death, they will make a retreat of one day during each month, without omitting any of their ordinary duties.

252. No one will make any extraordinary mortification without the permission of the Superior General.

253. They will keep no money nor anything else; neither will they give nor deposit anything, except in the hands of the Superior.

254. They will have no books without permission, nor will they write in, or put any mark upon those of which they have the use.

255. They will not appropriate to themselves anything belonging to the house, or the chamber of another, nor must they accept anything, but with the permission of the Superior.

✓ 256. They will keep nothing locked without permission, and the Superior can always enter into their chambers when she thinks proper.

✓ 257. No Sister will leave her chamber without being decently dressed.

✓ 258. At the hour appointed for any duty, the Sisters will repair immediately to the destined place, leaving even a letter half formed.

✓ 259. Through a spirit of mortification, and even

for the preservation of health, no one will eat or drink between the meals without permission.

260. No one will take snuff without the approbation of the Superior General.

261. On rising in the morning, they will make their beds, put all their affairs in order, and sweep their chambers, at least every third day, except those who will be dispensed by the Superior.

262. They will be careful to preserve in their persons, and in everything, the cleanliness so useful for health, and the common edification.

263. Those who are sick will make it known to the Superior, or infirmarian if there be one, but they will never take any remedy, nor make choice of a physician without the permission of the Superior.

CHAPTER II.—*Duties towards Superiors.*

264. Should a Sister perceive that one of her sisters is experiencing a strong temptation, she will make it known to the Superior, in order that, by her maternal care and charitable advice, she may apply the suitable remedies.

265. The Sisters will not inquire curiously among themselves what the Superiors will do, or ought to do, in what concerns the government of

the house; they will not speak of it among themselves, nor make any conjecture on the subject; they will confine themselves to their own employment, and wait in peace for what will be decided either for themselves or for others.

266. All will rise and incline before the Superiors and priests, and will never speak to them but with respect. The Novices will observe the same in regard to their Mistress. A Sister, to whom the Superior will speak or make some reproach, will listen to her humbly, and she will not interrupt her.

267. A Sister who has received a refusal from one Superior must not address herself to another on the same subject without stating the refusal she received from the first.

268. If a Sister finds herself prevented, by any reason whatever, from fulfilling the duties of her employment, she will declare it to the Superior, who will take measures to supply her place, if she judges it proper to discharge her.

269. All will make the reddition of conscience to the Superior General, or the one she may delegate, as is the usage.

270. All that is thus declared in confidence is under the most inviolable secrecy, and the persons who are the depositaries of it can never make use of it without the express or legitimately presumed consent of those who confided it.

CHAPTER III.—*Duties towards their Companions.*

271. The Sisters will not speak of the faults or imperfections of their companions, or other Sisters, except to the Superior or visitatrice, through a motive of charity or utility.

272. They will have no particular conversation with the postulants, the Novices, nor with the Sisters recalled to the Mother-House to undergo some trial.

273. They will be careful not to raise their voice when speaking, nor to contest with one another; if on some points they have different opinions, they will expose their reasons with modesty, having in view only the interests of truth.

274. They will avoid blaming or praising one part of the world rather than another; these comparisons and preferences are ordinarily but little conformed to charity, pleasing some and displeasing others.

275. Those who visit the sick will avoid being troublesome to them, and will speak to them with discretion, and in a manner to edify and console them.

276. A Sister will never command another Sister, her equal, unless she be delegated by the Superior.

277. No Sister will interfere in the employment of another, nor enter into her office, without the permission of the Superior, or, in case of necessity, the permission of the one who officiates.

278. They will not enter into the chambers of one another without permission, nor without knocking.

279. Through a spirit of modesty, they will avoid touching one another, even in play, except to embrace each other in token of charity on some extraordinary occasions, as at arrivals and departures.

280. The Sisters who will be changed from an establishment will take nothing with them without the permission of the Superior of the establishment they are leaving.

CHAPTER IV.—*Duties towards Externs.*

281. No Sister will invite externs to visit them or speak to those who are in the house, without a general or particular permission from the Superior.

282. Visits to persons of the world are not permitted, except through necessity, duty of charity, or civility, and they must be as short as possible.

283. The Sisters will have a great veneration for priests, and will never speak of them but with res-

pect; they will be very reserved in the visits they make to them, or receive from them, avoiding all that would have the appearance of levity, of freedom, or loss of time, and much more all familiarity.

284. Those who have the charge of adorning the church and the altars will avoid ever to be in the sacristy with the priests, and they must never be there alone with one.

285. No Sister will take charge of letters or of other commissions from strangers for her companions, or from her companions for strangers, without permission from the Superior. If they are sometimes obliged to relate news of the world, they must never do it inconsiderately nor uselessly.

286. They must not speak of what is done or said, nor of what passes among them, without the authorization of the Superior.

287. It is expressly forbidden to make known their Rules and Constitutions to any person without a written permission from the Superior General. They will not charge themselves with the affairs of others, even under pretext of doing an act of charity, without the permission of the Superior General.

288. When they meet with a favorable opportunity of leading the neighbor to piety, the Sisters will endeavor to edify him by good discourse, to

excite him to virtue, and engage him to go to confession.

289. The Sisters who are traveling will lodge in the houses of the Congregation, if there be any in the places where they stop. Whilst they remain there, they will be under obedience to the Local Superior, unless by their place, or by the delegation of the Superior General, they are above her.

290. All will have these Rules with them and will read them once a month, in order that they be deeply impressed on their minds and rendered familiar to them.

CHAPTER V.—*Duties of the Superior General.*

291. The Sister who is raised to the dignity of Superior General must preserve low sentiments of herself. The authority with which she is invested has not been given to her for herself, but for the common good; she will render a rigorous account of it at the last day.

292. Her life must, therefore, be a life of devotedness and sacrifice; she must immolate herself at each instant, she must renounce her ideas, her inclinations and her repose, making herself all to all, to gain all to Jesus Christ.

293. Regarding all the Sisters as her beloved daughters, she must have for them bowels of com-

passion, and show to all an equal interest, taking care not to give reason for any one to accuse her of having favorites or of making exceptions of persons.

294. She must know how to unite firmness and charity, nevertheless, in doubt, she will incline rather to mildness than severity.

295. She will endeavor to gain the hearts of her daughters, and to govern them more by persuasion than by command, yet she should not suffer her authority to be despised, or not sufficiently respected.

296. For the tranquility of her conscience and the success of her administration, she will act in such a manner that nothing can be found reprehensible in her conduct, but, on the contrary, she must be a model of regularity and all religious virtues.

CHAPTER VI.—*Duties of the Assistants of the Superior General.*

297. The Assistants aid the Superior General in her administration, and supply her place when necessary; they must be models of piety, zeal, wisdom, prudence and discretion; they must have a perfect knowledge of the Rules and Constitutions, and a devoted love for the Congregation.

298. It is their duty to attend carefully to all that concerns the Superior General, as to her health, her clothing, her food; to see that she has what is suit-

able for her, to prevent her from exceeding the bounds of moderation in labor, in mortification, or otherwise; in this, however, they will avoid impertunity or minutiae.

299. They will be closely united among themselves by the bonds of charity and confidence, having nothing hid from the Superior, speaking to her with respect, but with candor, and having but one heart and one soul with her, as they participate in the same authority.

300. When the Assistants are consulted in confidence by some Sisters, who confide to them their pains and difficulties, they will reply to them with great charity, prudence and discretion, without flattering or discouraging them; but they will carefully avoid saying any thing that could give them an idea of the intentions of the Superior General, that they may not compromise her, or shackle her proceedings. They will keep an absolute secrecy on what has been confided to them.

301. Neither the Assistants, nor any other member of the Particular Council, will have correspondence with any of the Sisters on the affairs of the Congregation.

302. When commissioned by the Superior General to write for her they will subscribe Sister N, for our Mother.

CHAPTER VII.—*Of the Admonitrice of the Superior General.*

303. The First Assistant is, by her nomination, the admonitrice of the Superior General, that is, she is charged to represent to her, with suitable respect, whatever may appear irregular in her conduct, and what she may judge important for the benefit of the Congregation.

304. If she fears to be mistaken she will consult the other councillors, and invoke the light of the Holy Spirit, then, divesting herself of all personal consideration, she will speak with a holy freedom according to her conscience and the spirit of God.

305. She will keep profound silence upon the subject she believed it her duty to speak of, and upon the manner in which the Superior received her advice. If she perceives that the admonition was fruitless, she will invoke anew light from heaven, consult the councillors, and speak again to the Superior; in fine, if the Particular Council considers the matter of a serious nature, she will give information of it to the Bishop, who will judge and decide what is to be done.

CHAPTER VIII.—*Duties of the Mistress of Novices.*

306. The prosperity of the Congregation, and the good it is intended to effect, depend upon the

manner in which the subjects are formed. It is then essential that the Mistress of Novices be endowed with tact, wisdom, prudence, discernment, zeal and solid piety. She must have a perfect knowledge of the Rules and Constitutions, and feel the importance of her charge.

307. She will be careful to instill into the minds of the novices a contempt for worldly things, showing to them their nothingness, she will excite them to a love of virtue, desire of perfection, and perfect conformity to the will of God.

308. She will represent to them frequently the pains and contradictions they are to expect, the privations they will have to suffer in complying with the duties of their employments; she will read and explain to them three or four times, during the year of trial, the Rules and Constitutions, in order that they may know well to what they oblige themselves by their profession.

309. She will watch over them, examine them, and not allow any fault to pass without endeavoring with prudence and mildness to correct it.

310. She will endeavor to penetrate into their interior to discover their inclinations, their weaknesses and their illusions, to give them just ideas of a spiritual life, to banish from their minds all scruples and littleness, to conduct them to perfec-

tion by the way suitable for each, and according to their character and capacity.

311. She will behave towards them with mildness and amiability, endeavoring to gain their confidence by her goodness, to attract them to her, in order to engage and dispose them to open their hearts and discover their pains and temptations to her, seeking from her the consolation they need; she will justify their confidence by her perfect discretion.

312. She will inspire them with a fondness for meditation, will exercise them in the practice of obedience, and of all the virtues required in a good religious. She will be prudent in the choice of the books she will allow them to read.

313. For the spiritual good of her novices she may impose upon them some penances in the interior of the novitiate, but not elsewhere, without the permission of the Superior General.

CHAPTER IX.—*Duties of the Procuratrix.*

314. The Procuratrix must be wise, prudent and grave. She must have a sound judgment, be moderate in her conduct, and of an humble and submissive disposition. She must be in the habit of keeping accounts and have talent for business,

have order in her ideas, and an exact knowledge of the value of things.

315. She will be careful not to let the care of temporal things cause her to neglect the virtues of her vocation and the perfection of her soul. She will never omit, without necessity, the common exercises, especially meditation, the examine of conscience and the spiritual reading. She will keep silence as much as possible, preserving by this means peace of mind, and avoiding the dissipation which the bustle of her affairs might occasion.

316. Being obliged, by her employment, to have frequent intercourse with seculars, she will be recollected, mild and civil with them, easy in her bargains, and even generous if it be necessary, but never extravagant, imprudent, or inconsiderate, because the goods she is charged to administer are the patrimony of Jesus Christ, and she will have to render Him an account of her administration. She will do nothing extraordinary without the permission of the Superior General, and she will never refuse to execute her orders.

317. She is charged with the care of all the temporalities, the domestics, the workmen, the cultivation of the grounds, the repairs that are to be made, the buying of provisions of all kinds, and the receiving of them, she will also pay all the ex-

penses; for this purpose she will receive money from the Superior General.

318. She will be mild and affable with all the Sisters, and will show no partiality, will foresee their wants, will distribute to each what will be necessary for her, and will be vigilant to avoid abuse.

319. She will keep the ordinary provisions under lock, will visit them often from garret to cellar, in order that nothing may be spoiled.

320. Her register of receipts and expenses will be kept with great exactness; she will give and receive receipts for all amounts over two dollars.

321. She will have an Assistant who, under her direction, will have the charge of keeping the refectory clean and in order, and who will not fail to have water for washing the hands, and who will also attend to changing the towels, &c.

322. She will receive from the Vestiaire the linen counted that will be necessary, and will return it in the same manner; she will change the napkins every eight days.

323. She will see that the tables be prepared a quarter of an hour before the repast, after which she will have them cleared, the refectory swept, and everything put in the greatest order.

CHAPTER X.—*Duties of the Secretary.*

324. The Secretary is, as it were, the hand and the memory of the Particular Council, and of the Superior General; her qualities must be exactitude and discretion, there must be neatness and clearness in her accounts, order in her register, and in the other things confided to her.

325. She will preserve in a particular reservatory and under lock: 1st. The approvals of the Congregation, with the Constitutions and other papers that have relation to them; 2nd. A list of all the Sisters of the Congregation; 3d. A list of all the Sisters Coadjutrix; 4th. One of all the postulants and novices; 5th. One of all the Sisters who left the Congregation; 6th. One of all the establishments of the Congregation; 7th. The annual tableau of all the establishments: 8th. A necrology of the Sisters who died in the Congregation, with some details upon their lives and principal actions; 9th. Copies of circulars written to the establishments, and important letters; 10th. The papers relative to the elections; 11th. Papers which treat of donations to the establishments or to the Congregation.

326. She will not destroy any letter or other paper without an order from the Superior General, who will take for this the advice of her Council.

327. She will have a small book, in which she will write the orders the Superior will give her, so that each thing may be done with exactitude.

328. She will have the Seal of the Congregation, in order to seal the letters she will write in the name of the Superior General.

329. Her letters will be clear, neat, precise, and conformable to the usage of Society, breathing a spirit of piety, which must be the distinctive character of the Community.

330. The more varied and distracting her functions are, the more she will endeavor to preserve the habit of recollection.

331. If she perceives that the Superior forgets anything relative to letters that are to be written, or answers to be given, she will remind her respectfully.

332. If she has an under-Secretary to assist her in her office, she will treat her kindly, employ her discreetly, and grant her suitable relaxation.

CHAPTER XI.—*Duties of the Infirmarian.*

333. The functions of the Infirmarian must be performed with the greatest charity; the Sister charged with this employment should excel in mildness, patience, care, vigilance and compassion.

334. She will accompany the physician in the visits he makes to the sick, will receive his prescriptions, and comply with them exactly, both in giving the remedies and following the regimen.

335. She will be attentive to the wants of the sick, and will render with alacrity the most repugnant services, seeing Jesus Christ Himself in the person of her suffering Sisters.

336. The beds of the sick will be made at least once a day, the linen changed as often as necessary for cleanliness, and the soiled linen will never be left in the infirmary.

337. When the Sisters go to the infirmary to see those who are sick, they are not permitted to speak in a loud tone, nor to remain there long.

338. The Infirmarian will also attend to prevent the convalescent from making a noise that could disturb the sick.

339. If it be necessary to remain up with a sick Sister, or if the Infirmarian is in need of help for anything else, she will make it known to the Superior, who will provide.

340. She will say the morning and evening prayers for the sick, and from time to time she will read for them something pious and short.

CHAPTER XII.—*Duties of the Local Superior.*

341. The Local Superiors will zealously maintain among their Sisters regularity, obedience, the spirit of piety, and love of silence; they will never allow any practice to be established which is not approved of by the Congregation.

342. They will avoid all singularity in nourishment, clothes, and furniture, and will attend regularly all the exercises, when their health and duties do not prevent.

343. They will not invite any persons to take meals in the establishment, nor will they eat out of their own house, except when traveling, unless with the permission of the Superior General.

344. They will be careful to know what communications and intercourse their Sisters have with externs, and will read all the letters written and received by them, except those of the Bishop, the Rev. Superior, the Superior General, and the members of the Particular Council.

345. They will not permit the Sisters to receive any gifts as marks of gratitude, pledges of friendship, or otherwise, from the children or other persons.

346. If the Sisters do not frequent the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, as the Constitutions require, they will speak to them on the

subject and will exhort them, and insist on their going to confession, and advise them strongly to follow the advice of their confessor relative to going to communion.

347. They will carefully avoid reprehending the Sisters before seculars.

348. They will not permit them to go out without a companion, unless it be very difficult to do otherwise.

349. Owing an account to God and to the Congregation of the funds accruing from the establishment, they will make use of them with a wise economy, and neglect nothing that can cause the goods of the poor to be religiously employed according to their destination.

350. They will keep an exact account of what they receive and expend, and they will not omit inscribing any sum under pretext that it is small. They will close the accounts each year and present them to the Visitatrice, who will examine and sign them.

351. They will not permit their Sisters to work for the churches, for priests, for seculars, nor even for their parents, without the permission of the Superior General.

352. They will not have the house they occupy repaired out of the funds of the Congregation,

unless they are authorized to do so by the Superior General. They will not conclude any arrangement of importance with the founders, the benefactors, or administrators, without the consent of the Superior General, obtained or legitimately presumed, and which must in all cases be asked of her.

353. Every two months they will render an account to the Superior General of the conduct of the Sisters, of the affairs of the house, of the difficulties they experience in their administration, and of their interior trials.

354. They will take the greatest care to instruct the children, to watch over them, to form their hearts, to make them observe the rules of modesty, to prevent or break particular friendships, to prevent their receiving books or letters which have not first been examined by them.

355. If a child evinces an indocile, incorrigible disposition, especially if she appears vicious and dangerous for others, the Local Superior will make it known to the parents, and dismiss her from the school, to preserve the manners and morals of the other children.

356. They will never find fault with the teachers in presence of the children either by word or manner; they will, on the contrary, endeavor to conciliate for them the love, confidence, and respect

of the children by honoring and showing them esteem and deference as much as their station allows.

357. They will consider it of strict obligation to oversee the instruction of the several classes, in order that it may be what it should, to attend also to the health, the food, and the clothing of the boarders. A part of these duties may be entrusted to one or more Sisters, who must give an account of them to the Local Superior.

358. The sick children will be the special objects of their tenderness, on them they will lavish maternal care and all the consolations they can bestow. If one of their pupils be sick at her own home, they will send some one to visit her, or they will go themselves if the sickness is dangerous and the residence not too far.

359. In their intercourse with the parents of the pupils they will be polite, kind, affable, and as condescending as possible, but will be firm against vain pretensions, and whatever could lead to any abuse.

360. They will see that the dormitories are inspected particularly at the hours of rising and retiring. They will keep them shut during the day, and will make a difficulty of allowing the pupils to go to them, and in general they will not allow them to go unaccompanied by a Sister.

361. They will preside each year at the examination of the boarders and day-scholars, and will arrange with the teachers the rewards, which should be given according to merit.

362. They will see that the Sisters write to the Superior General at least every four months, and will permit them to do so more frequently if they wish, and they must never seek to know the subject of their correspondence, essentially secret and confidential.

363. They will furnish willingly all that is necessary for their Sisters, both in sickness and in health, to each according to her needs.

CHAPTER XIII.—*Duties of the Sisters towards their Superiors.*

364. The Sisters must be polite, obliging and respectful towards their Superior. They will obey her promptly and affectionately, on account of the authority of God with which she is invested. They will never permit themselves to criticise her conduct or her administration, and they will consider as a serious fault whatever would tend to diminish, in the minds of their companions, that confidence she should enjoy.

365. They will keep her informed of all that concerns the pupils, of their disposition, their behavior,

their application, their success, and they will receive with deference the advice she will give them in this regard.

366. They will consult with her upon the recompenses to be given to the pupils; they must have, at least, a general permission, and must never deviate from her directions or go contrary to her wishes.

367. They will deliver to her all letters which they will write or receive, except those written to, or received from, the Bishop, the Rev. Superior, the Superior General, and the members of the Particular Council.

CHAPTER XIV.—*Duties of Teachers.*

368. The principal end which the Congregation proposes to itself with regard to the neighbor is to instruct youth and form them to virtue.

369. Those who are charged with the instruction of youth should commence by being well persuaded that the future of the children depends greatly on the manner in which they are brought up. If the truths of Faith are engraved in their minds, and on their hearts, if they are inspired with a fear of sin, with a love of virtue and a taste for piety, there is much reason to hope that they will lead good, honest, Christian lives. If on the

contrary they are deprived of a Christian education, they will generally yield themselves up to their evil inclinations, often becoming a dishonor to their family, a scourge to society, and a desolation to the Church.

370. Being well penetrated with these truths, the teachers should have an ardent desire to procure the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, by the good education of their pupils; and in order to succeed in this enterprise they should observe the following:—

1st. They will apply with courage to their own advancement in perfection, for the more they love God the more zeal they will have to make Him loved by the children; and the more they are united with God the more unction there will be in their advices and exhortations. Besides, if their pupils find in them models of piety, modesty and charity, they will be touched by their good example, and will learn to imitate them: “To conduct to virtue the way of precept is very long, but that of example is very short.”

2d. They will endeavor, by the means of prayer, to draw upon their work the blessing of God, remembering that all they can do by their advice, by their lessons, by their care, is to plant and to water, but God alone can give the increase.

3d. They will endeavor to gain the hearts of their pupils, for a teacher who has the tact of gaining the heart can do with the children almost what she wishes; her counsels, her admonitions, even her reprimands are well received; while if she is not loved, all that she does, all that she says, is censured, criticised, taken in bad part; in fine, she can do but little good.

371. To gain their hearts the Sisters should themselves love the children, manifesting to them this charity by speaking to them with kindness, and being very attentive to their wants, both spiritual and temporal.

372. They will, however, be careful not to resemble those weak and foolish mothers, who, making idols of their children, consult their will, yield to their caprices, and let them grow up with their defects. They should unite firmness with mildness, reproving and correcting their pupils when necessary, but avoiding all warmth of temper, and cross or peevish tones, which may dishearten or irritate but which never correct.

373. A strict impartiality will aid very much in securing the esteem and affection of the children. They must, therefore, be very careful to have no unjust preferences.

374. To maintain order, silence, and all the

points of good discipline in their classes, the Sisters must be exact to be there at the hour appointed. They will speak little, and in a moderate tone of voice. They will distribute their time in such a manner as to give to each duty, to each lesson, to each division, but the time allotted. They will study to give their explanations in a clear, concise and interesting manner, and will encourage the children by showing them the utility of what is taught, and by giving them, from time to time, some little recompense.

375. They will endeavor to have them make progress in reading, writing, orthography, arithmetic, &c. At the time appointed they will teach them to sew, to knit, to embroider, &c.; in a word, they will neglect nothing that can be truly useful to them.

376. They will apply with diligence to teach the children the catechism, and especially to make them understand it well; they will teach them how to examine their conscience, to make their confession, to combat their evil inclinations; they will instill into their hearts respect for religion, relish for prayer, submission to their parents, love of modesty, horror of duplicity, lying and other vices. They will inspire them with a love of work, of order and neatness, which will prepare them for the duties of after life.

377. It is not by long discourses that they will succeed in engraving all these principles on the hearts of their pupils; some touching reflections, some advice given, either in public or in private, will produce more effect.

378. They will watch carefully over their pupils during recreations, and be attentive to their plays and conversations, in order that they may be in conformity with modesty and good breeding.

379. They will exhaust the methods of persuasion before they will have recourse to punishment; when it is necessary to use severity they will maintain their ordinary calm, being careful to use no improper or offensive expression. They will never strike the children, and will act with discrimination, proportioning the punishment to the fault in such a manner that the culpable as well as the innocent shall be forced to acknowledge their justice and moderation.

380. They must be careful not to require too much from an indocile child, lest they compromise their authority.

381. When there is question of expelling a child, or of inflicting some extraordinary punishment, of reforming abuses, of making some ameliorations, they must, before acting, take the advice of the Superior.

382. For the direction of their classes, they will follow the conduct of the Brothers of the Christian Schools of Ven. de la Salle, unless the Superior decides otherwise.

383. The Sisters will concert together, and sustain one another in all that they ordain; in a word, they will comport themselves in such a manner that the children cannot remark any opposition or contradiction among them.

CHAPTER XV.—*Duties of the Sisters who have Charge of the Hospitals.*

384. The Sisters who are appointed to take charge of the sick in the hospitals, must be animated by faith, possess mildness, patience, charity, courage, and firmness; they must be actuated by supernatural motives, so as to overcome all repugnances, remembering that Jesus Christ receives, as done to Himself, the care bestowed upon the poor and the sick in His name, and He pledges Himself to recompense it.

385. When patients enter the hospital, the Sisters will exhort them to go to confession, for which they will prepare them in the best manner they can, without, however, importuning them; they will instruct the inmates of the hospital with zeal and prudence,

according to the capacity and degree of knowledge possessed by those to be instructed. They will consult with the confessor in certain cases as to what had best be done.

386. They will behave towards the sick with mildness, benevolence, and charity, at the same time with the firmness necessary to maintain order and secure the observance of the rules.

387. The prescriptions of the physicians must be carefully followed ; the Sisters will not allow them to be deviated from in the least.

388. They will preserve order and cleanliness in the food, in the remedies, in the rooms, in the clothing, in the bedding ; in a word, in everything and everywhere ; they will take precautions to prevent contagious diseases from spreading.

389. They will treat the chaplain with all the respect due to his character, avoiding whatever may have the appearance of levity or familiarity, either with him or with other clergymen who visit the hospital, that no grounds for censure may be given.

390. In their intercourse with the administrators, the physicians, and surgeons, they will be very reserved, at the same time polite and respectful.

391. They will watch carefully over the morals

of the inmates of the hospital; to preserve them from idleness and its vices, they will keep them employed as much as possible.

CHAPTER XVI.—*Duties of the Sisters who have Charge of the Prisoners.*

392. The Sisters who have care of the prisoners will join mildness and firmness to a well regulated exterior; they will treat the prisoners with kindness, never speaking to them in a harsh, imperious, contemptuous manner, calculated to make them feel the humiliation of their condition; but they will always act with firmness, causing the rules to be observed, order maintained, and their authority respected.

393. For the preservation of morals, they will not permit the men and women to be together during recreations, nor at any other time.

394. The Sisters will never receive the prisoners in their own rooms. They will give at the door, or at the place destined for that purpose, what they ask and have a right to receive. When they go to see those who are sick, in the infirmary or elsewhere, there must always be two Sisters, accompanied by a turnkey.

395. They must be skilful in seizing the occasions of instructing the prisoners and leading them to virtue, but they must distrust hypocrites, who do good to be better treated, and they must not give more to them than to others. They will be careful not to yield to a false compassion, and they will be impartial, just, and equitable towards all.

396. If a prisoner acknowledges to them his crime and the cause of his imprisonment, they will engage him to confess it, and they will not betray his confidence.

397. They will see that the sick are well attended, will execute the orders of the physician, will maintain neatness everywhere, will attend to the food, the clothing, the bedding, and the furniture of every kind; they will watch carefully that nothing belonging to the establishment be taken away, broken, or spoiled.

398. They will require the prisoners to work conformably to rules established or admitted by the administration, and they will attend equally to the interests of those who labor, and those for whom the labor is performed.

CHAPTER XVII. — *Duties of the Sisters who have Charge of Visiting the Sick.*

399. The Sisters who are called to visit the sick will go without delay, observing modesty and recol-

lection; they will acquit themselves zealously of their duties, acting, not from merely natural compassion, but with the feelings of charity that faith inspires.

400. They will not pass the night with the sick, nor will they remain longer than necessary to give the required care, and to explain to those who assist them what is to be done, to instruct the sick prudently, to exhort them to receive the sacraments, and to prepare them, if they are to be administered.

401. They will have the ordinances of the physician punctually followed, will prepare the remedies if necessary, will indicate the manner of administering them, or will administer them themselves if they think it expedient.

402. They will be very careful in prescribing, whilst waiting for the physician, and will not fail to have one called, unless they understand the disease very well, and it is not dangerous.

403. They will solicit charity of persons able to bestow it, in favor of the sick poor, who are in actual want; they will ask for wine, soups, wood, linen, and other things needed.

404. If it be necessary to render services contrary to propriety, especially to men, they will excuse themselves from performing them, on the

plea of the sanctity of their state, and have these services performed by others.

405. When the Sisters go out to visit the sick, they will always inform their companions, that they may know where they are.

CHAPTER XVIII.—*Duties of the Vestiare.*

406. The qualifications necessary for the Sister charged with this duty are neatness, order, a foreseeing and attentive charity, and a great zeal to maintain all according to the rules of religious poverty.

407. She will have the care of the linen of the house, of the clothes, and of everything relating to them, of the furniture of the beds, as curtains, mattresses, coverlets, and pillows.

408. She will inscribe exactly upon a register all the effects of some value that are confided to her, those that have been newly made, and those which were given, or come from any source whatever. She will also keep an exact account of those which are destroyed, of those bestowed on the different establishments, with notice of the day, to be always ready to give an account to the Superior when she demands it.

409. For the expenses she is obliged to make, she will have recourse to the Procuratrix, and in case of necessity, to the Superior.

410. The linen and clothes will be placed in order in the places destined for them, the old will be separated from the new; the Sisters will have the articles mended that require it, and when they will be out of use, she will take the advice of the Superior to know what is best to be done with them.

411. She will keep separately, and write an exact account, of what belongs to the postulants and novices, in order to return all to them if they leave; if they make their profession, all these effects will belong to the Community.

412. She will direct all the work belonging to her employment, both repairing old garments and making new ones.

413. She will be careful to distinguish by numbers the linen and clothes which have been used by persons afflicted with contagious diseases, and after the death of such persons, the articles used by them will be burned, if the Superior judges it proper.

414. The stockings and the under-flannel garments will be marked, and each Sister will have her own. All the other clothes will be in common.

415. The Vestiare will count the linen she gives for the kitchen, refectory, and infirmary, and will receive them in the same manner.

416. She will give clean sheets every month;

and a change of linen to the Sisters, and napkins for the refectory, every Saturday. If some persons need to change more frequently, she will give them what is necessary, with permission from the Superior.

417. She will give the soiled clothes to be washed, will be careful to have them all returned, and will have the mattresses cleaned when necessary.

CHAPTER XIX.—*Duties of the Sacristine.*

418. The Sister charged with this employment will consider as a great favor the advantage of serving Jesus Christ in His own house, and will endeavor so much the more to preserve a pure heart, as she approaches so near to the holy altar.

419. It belongs to her to regulate the adorning of the altars, and all that is used for the holy Sacrifice of Mass, and the other religious ceremonies; she has care of the vestments, the linen belonging to the altar, the communion cloths, the arrangement of the places in the chapel, the distribution of the pictures, &c. If any repairs are necessary, she will receive the orders of the Superior.

420. She will keep the chapel, sacristy, and everything relating to the divine service, in great neatness.

421. On great festival days, as Holy Thursday

and Corpus Christi, she will borrow nothing without the permission of the Superior; if she borrows some articles, she will be very careful of them.

422. If a Priest who is unknown comes to say Mass, she will acquaint the Chaplain or Superior of the circumstance, that the customary precautions may be taken.

423. All must be suitably prepared before the Priest arrives to say Mass; there must always be some water in the sacristy that he may wash his hands.

424. She will clean and adorn the altar with great care and reverence, approaching with fear and trembling the holy place where Jesus Christ resides in person.

425. She will keep the lamp burning both night and day before the Blessed Sacrament. She will attend to having water blessed when necessary. She will supply the rooms with holy water on the days appointed by the Superior.

426. She will keep an inventory of every thing belonging to the chapel and sacristy, and will note particularly every change that takes place from destruction, renewing, &c.

427. The chapel will be swept twice a week, or more frequently if necessary.

428. She will endeavor to keep every thing in perfect order.

CHAPTER XX.—*Duties of the Novices.*

429. The Novices will apply themselves to reform their hearts, to cast off the old man and clothe themselves with Jesus Christ, to enter seriously into the way of perfection, since without this they cannot be good Sisters of Charity.

430. They will be entirely submissive and respectful to their Mistress, will speak to her with confidence, will open their hearts to her, and give her an account of their interior dispositions, of their faults, their inclinations, their temptations, and their weaknesses; remaining silent only upon their sins, which they are obliged to declare to their confessor only. There is no more efficacious means to form to virtue than this cordial and frank opening of the heart. The Mistress is bound to keep a profound secrecy upon all that has been told her in confidence.

431. They will go to confession every eight days, and they will endeavor to merit being allowed to go to communion on Sundays and festivals. They may communicate more frequently, with the permission of the confessor and the consent of the Mistress.

432. They will have a low opinion of themselves, believing themselves below all others; they will receive with humility, and even with joy, the reprimands, mortifications, penances, and humiliations, that come to them from what source soever, show-

ng that they have no other desire than to reform themselves and become perfect.

433. They will have a supernatural affection for one another, will behave towards one another with cordiality and kindness, will live in a true fraternal union; but they will avoid all particular friendships, which are a source of preferences, jealousies, antipathies, complaints, murmurs, and divisions, and are the ruin of true charity in communities; therefore, as soon as they feel too tender an affection for one of their companions they will make it known to their Mistress, and will follow her advice in order to stifle this fault in its birth.

434. If a Novice wavers in her vocation she will not speak of it to any one, except her Mistress or confessor.

435. If they think they have some complaints to make against their Mistress, they can speak of it only to the Superior General and the Rev. Superior.

436. They will apply themselves to learn all that they will have to teach, and to fulfil the duties that will be confided to them.

CHAPTER XXI.—*Duties of the Visitatrice of the Evening.*

437. A quarter of an hour after the evening prayers the Visitatrice will announce the hour for

being in bed by some strokes of the bell ; at this signal the lights will be extinguished, and all the persons of the house must get in bed if they are not already there.

438. Immediately after, the Visitatrice will go with a lantern into all the chambers except that of the Superior, will see if all be in order, and will take care especially of the fire.

439. If she finds a light in any of the chambers she will have it extinguished, and no consideration will stop her in a point so important.

440. Her office does not authorize her to keep a light longer than it is necessary for her to retire.

CHAPTER XXII.—*Duties of the Cook.*

441. The humble and painful employment of the Cook is indispensable in the house. She will acquit herself of it with zeal and devotedness, uniting herself to the sentiments of Martha preparing a suitable reception for Jesus Christ in her house.

442. She will preserve everywhere a great neatness, cleanliness in the preparation of food, and in all the vessels and utensils for cooking ; for the distribution of the meat she will make use of a carving knife and fork.

443. She will be exact to the hour, keeping every thing in readiness to put on the table five minutes before the bell rings.

444. She will preserve carefully what is returned from the refectory for the nourishment of the persons of the house, or for the poor, according as the Superior will decide.

445. Through a spirit of poverty she will be saving of the wood, the coal, and of every thing belonging to the kitchen.

446. She will not let any thing be prepared in the kitchen for any person without the permission of the Superior.

447. If a person comes to the kitchen to ask for what she has a right to have, she will give it to her promptly, avoiding all conversation and even superfluous words.

448. She will be very charitable to the Assistant Cooks and the Novices under her orders, and she will never use harsh nor imperious words, nor act in a rude, offensive manner. She will teach cooking in the best manner she can to those who are confided to her for this purpose.

449. To proceed in her office with more tranquility she will follow the orders of the Procuratrix, and will ask the provisions from her on the eve of each day.

450. In what regards the sick she will be subordinate to the Infirmarian, and will do carefully what will be commanded by her and nothing more.

451. If the duties of her employment interfere with the common exercises of piety she will perform them at some other time appointed.

CHAPTER XXIII.—*Duties of the Assistant Cook.*

452. The Assistant Cook will be under the orders of the Cook, to aid her in her employment, and to do whatever she will direct.

453. Her principle employment will be to wash the dishes, sweep the kitchen, clean the vegetables, carry the wood and water. She will do this willingly in the spirit of God, remembering the more humbling her employments are, the more merit she will have if she acquits herself well of them.

CHAPTER XXIV.—*Duties of the Excitatrix.*

454. A Sister, designated by the Superior, will be charged to ring the bell and awaken the Community in the morning. She will have an alarm in her chamber, in order to be sure to rise in time.

455. At the hour appointed, she will ring the bell; at the first sound, the ejaculation, "Live Jesus in our hearts," will be said, to which the Sisters will respond, "Forever."

CHAPTER XXV.—*Duties of the Purchaser.*

456. There will be a Sister appointed by the Superior to make the purchases; she should be

grave, recollected, docile, and of a well tried fidelity.

457. Every day she will learn from the Superior what she must purchase, and will receive from her the money necessary. She will procure provisions of a good quality, will buy at a reasonable price, and to effect this she will go farther if necessary.

458. The Superior and Procuratrix alone can give commissions to be made, and the Sister will refuse all those given her by other persons not authorized to do so.

459. She will make her commissions promptly and faithfully, will not lose her time in going uselessly from place to place, or in frivolous conversations.

460. She will act in such a manner as to edify everybody by her modesty and reserve in her words; as well those out of the house, as those of the house, with whom she has some business.

461. At her return home, she will give an account of the commissions with which she was charged, and will do it with uprightness and simplicity.

462. She will not relate, in the house, what she saw, heard, or did abroad, except to the persons who have the right to know it, and to whom it should be made known.

463. For her spiritual exercises, she will follow as much as she can the order of the day; when prevented, she will follow the directions of the Superior.

CHAPTER XXVI.—*Duties of the Portress.*

464. The Portress must be a person of confidence, and must be vigilant, upright and firm.

465. At the first stroke of the bell, she will repair to the door, she will speak through the shutter, and will not open the door till she knows the object of the demand.

466. When she has given entrance to the person, she will conduct her to the parlor, and then go and acquaint the Superior or the one who acts for her.

467. On the days appointed for confession, as soon as the confessor arrives, she will advertise all the Sisters, by a particular sound of the bell.

468. At the door, she will say but few words, avoiding all harsh or offensive expressions, but will speak mildly and modestly in order that everyone may retire content.

469. If a person of the house presents herself to go out, the portress, before opening the door, will write her name upon a copy-book, noting the hour; when she returns, a stroke of the pen will be passed over her name.

470. She will give to the Superior all the letters and packages she will receive, either for the Sisters or the boarders. The effects for the novices, as well as their letters, will be given to the Mistress of Novices.

471. She will be zealous in the distribution of alms, nevertheless, she will conform strictly to the limits the Superior has assigned her.

472. After the signal for rising in the morning, she will get the keys from the Superior; a little before going to bed, she will return them to her. She will make known to the Superior the persons who have gone out and who have not returned.

473. In order not to be dissipated and lose the interior spirit in an employment so subjecting, at each time the bell calls her, let her imagine she hears the voice of God, and propose to herself to do only His will.

CHAPTER XXVII.—*Obligation of the Rules.*

474. The rules of the most solemnly approved communities do not, of themselves, oblige under pain of venial sin; this is the opinion of the best spiritual writers, and many rules of religious orders make express mention of it.

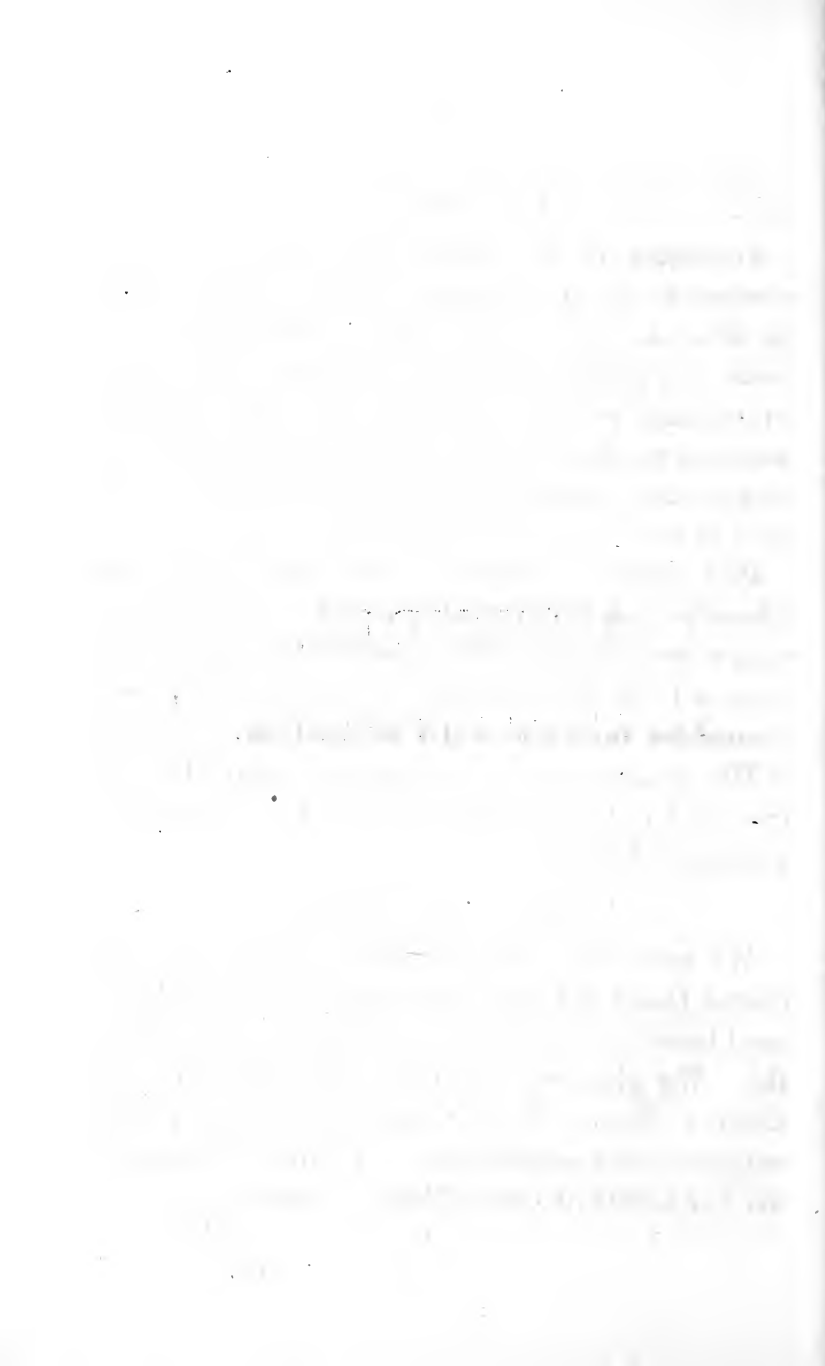
475. For the same reason, the rules of the Sisters of Providence, all-important as they are, do not oblige more. This declaration is necessary to prevent uneasiness and trouble in certain consciences.

476. Nevertheless, there would be sin, if the thing forbidden by the rule was bad in itself; if the Rev. Superior, or even the Superior, commanded in virtue of obedience; if the thing would give scandal; if it were done through contempt of the rule, or through negligence.

477. The Sisters will be zealous to observe the rules exactly, not through fear, but for the love of God, through the desire of corresponding with grace; of arriving at the perfection of their state, and of obtaining the eternal recompense promised to their fidelity. *Amen.*

APPENDIX.

PRAYER OF THE REUNION.



THE REUNION.

According to an ancient and constant usage received in our Community, all the Sisters recite six times a day, in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the prayer called the Reunion. The times for reciting it are as follows: after the morning Angelus, at nine, at noon, at three, at the beginning of the beads in the evening, and after the point of meditation has been read.

This prayer is called the Reunion, because the Adorable Heart of Jesus is, as it were, the rendez-vous where, in spite of the distance which separates them, all the Sisters reunite in order to reanimate themselves in the love of Our Lord, in confidence in His goodness, in the desire to imitate His virtues, and in the resolution to have for one another a mutual affection.

PRAYER OF THE REUNION.

We unite with all our Sisters to adore Thee, O Sacred Heart of Jesus, Heart most holy, most pure, most humble, most wise, most amiable, most merciful. We give, we consecrate, and immolate, our hearts to Thee. Deign to receive, possess, purify, enlighten, and sanctify them. O Divine Jesus, render our hearts like unto Thine. *Amen.*

This little prayer, after having been acknowledged as orthodox and pious by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, has been enriched with Indulgences by our Holy Father, Pius IX himself, in an Audience granted to Messrs. Lottin and Levrot, the 22nd of August, 1861. Every professed Sister of Providence gains an Indulgence of 100 days each time that she recites this prayer devoutly, and a Plenary Indulgence at the end of the month, with the ordinary conditions, provided she has been faithful to recite it, at least once, each day.

Here follow moreover, in extenso, the Petition, and the Response of His Holiness Pius IX. The originals are religiously preserved in the Archives of the Congregation (in the Diocese of Le Mans).

PETITION TO PIUS IX.

Beatissime Pater :

Sorores Congregationis, à Divinâ Providentiâ dictæ, et in Cenomanensi et in aliis 15 Galliarum diœcesibus existentis, numero 600 aut circiter, Professæ vel Novitiæ, ad pedes *Sanctitatis Vestræ* humiliter provolutæ, exponunt: quod, vi suarum Constitutionum, sexies singulis diebus una recitent sequentem precatiunculam :

“ Nous nous réunissons avec toutes nos Sœurs, etc (*comme ci-dessus*). ”

Porro, hæc precatiuncula à S. R. C. orthodoxa ac pia declarata est, his verbis: “Nihil obstat.”

Signat:

PETRUS MINETTI, Lateran. Canonic.,
S. C. Advoc., S. R. C. Assessor.

Quare, eædem præfatæ Sorores *Sanctitata Vestra* enixis precibus supplicant, quatenus ipsis quotiescumque hanc Precatiunculam piè recitaverint, *Centum Dies de Vera Indulgentia*; et, post mensum quotidianæ recitationis (saltem scilicet semel in die), *Indulgentiam Plenariam*, servatis servandis, die ab ipsis singulis eligendâ, de benignitate apostolica misericorditer in Domino concedere dignemini.

Romæ, die 23 Aug., 1861.

RESPONSE (PROPRIA MANU) OF PIUS IX.

Die 22 Augusti, 1861.

Pro gratia, servatis conditionibus, et favore sanctionialium.

PIUS P. P. IX.



CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Evidences.....	v.
Notice on the Origin of the Sisters of Providence....	vi.
Approbation of the Bishop of Le Mans.....	viii
Pontifical Approbation.....	xi.
<hr style="width: 10%; margin: 10px auto;"/>	
Preliminary Chapter—Of the Spirit and End which this Congregation proposes to itself.....	1

CONSTITUTIONS.—PART FIRST.

CHAPTER.	PAGE.
I. Of the Elections in General.....	3
II. Of the Government of the Congregation.....	5
III. Election of the Superior General.....	6
IV. Of the Election of the Particular Council.....	8
V. Of the Election of the Members of the General Council.....	10
VI. Functions of the Superior General.....	12
VII. Duties of the Particular Council.....	15
VIII. Duties of the General Council.....	17
IX. Of the Visitatrice.....	18
X. Functions of the Local Superior.....	20
XI. Of the Relation between the Congregation and the Bishops.....	22
XII. Of the intercourse between the Sisters and the Ecclesiastics.....	23
XIII. Duties of the Congregation towards Benefac- tors.....	24
XIV. Of New Establishments.....	25

PART SECOND.

Of the Means the Congregation employs to Form and Sanctify its Subjects.

CHAPTER.	PAGE.
I. Of the Postulants.....	27
II. Of the Probation of the Postulants.....	28
III. Novitiate.....	29
IV. Of the Dismissal of the Novices.....	31
V. Of the Engagement of the Sisters.....	32
VI. Of the Vow of Poverty.....	33
VII. Of the Vow of Chastity.....	34
VIII. Of the Vow of Obedience.....	35
IX. Of the Vow to Employ themselves in In- structing Youth, and in taking care of the Sick.....	36
X. Of the Exercises of the Day.....	36
XI. Of the Chapter.....	39
XII. Of the Ordinary and Extraordinary Con- fessor.....	40
XIII. Of Communion.....	41
XIV. Of some Religious Virtues in Particular...	42
XV. Of the Retreat.....	46
XVI. Of the Feasts of the Congregation.....	48
XVII. Of the Instruction of the Sisters.....	48
XVIII. Of Traveling.....	49
XIX. Of Food.....	50
XX. Of Dress.....	51
XXI. Of Furniture.....	52
XXII. Of the Sick Sisters.....	53
XXIII. Of the Decease of the Sisters.....	54

PART THIRD.

Of the Means to Labor for the Sanctification of our Neighbor.

CHAPTER.	PAGE.
I. Of the Instruction of Youth.....	56
II. Of Visiting the Sick at their own Homes.....	57
III. Of Hospitals.....	58
IV. Of Prisons.....	59
V. Conduct of the Sisters towards Seculars.....	61

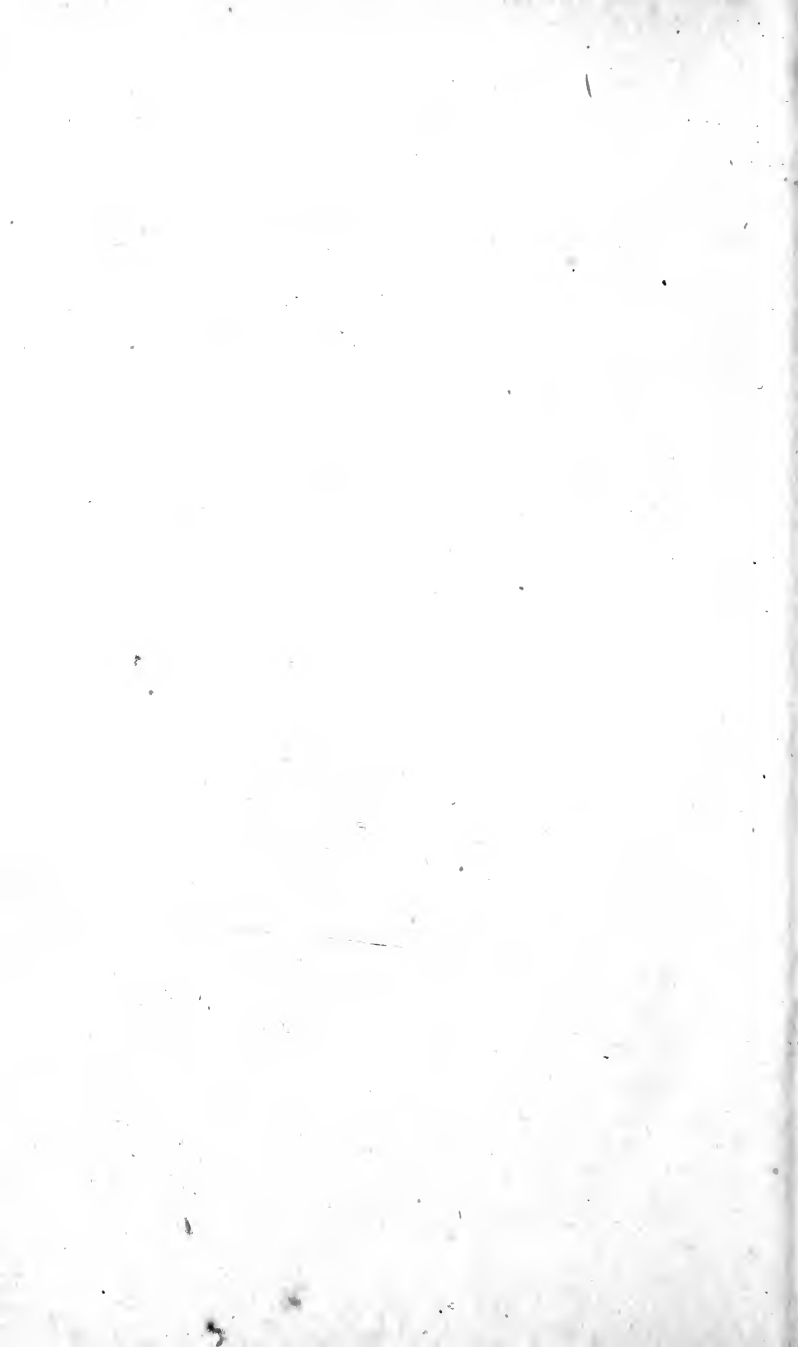
RULES.

I. Duties towards Themselves.....	63
II. Duties towards Superiors.....	65
III. Duties towards their Companions.....	67
IV. Duties towards Externs.....	68
V. Duties of the Superior General.....	70
VI. Duties of the Assistants of the Superior General.....	71
VII. Of the Admonitrice of the Superior General	73
VIII. Duties of the Mistress of Novices.....	73
IX. Duties of the Procuratrix.....	75
X. Duties of the Secretary.....	78
XI. Duties of the Infirmarian.....	79
XII. Duties of the Local Superior.....	81
XIII. Duties of the Sisters towards their Superiors	85
XIV. Duties of the Teachers.....	86
XV. Duties of the Sisters who have Charge of the Hospitals.....	91
XVI. Duties of the Sisters who have Charge of Prisoners.....	93

CHAPTER.	PAGE.
XVII. Duties of the Sisters who have Charge of Visiting the Sick.....	94
XVIII. Duties of the Vestiare.....	96
XIX. Duties of the Sacristine.....	98
XX. Duties of the Novices.....	100
XXI. Duties of the Visitatrice of the Evening....	101
XXII. Duties of the Cook.....	102
XXIII. Duties of the Assistant Cook.....	104
XXIV. Duties of the Excitatrice.....	104
XXV. Duties of the Purchaser.....	104
XXVI. Duties of the Portress.....	106
XXVII. Obligation of the Rules.....	107
APPENDIX—Prayer of the Reunion.....	109

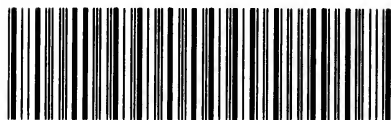








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